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**ABSTRACT**

Developed in the belief that the regular inclusion of literature in the elementary school curriculum can lead to a dynamic interaction and integration in the language arts, this booklet provides an annotated bibliography of children's literature with teaching suggestions. The activities are arranged so that they can be modified from one book to another. Reflecting the writing process, the teaching suggestions are grouped according to prewriting, writing, editing, revision, and extension activities. Including some "classic" literature titles such as "Charlotte's Web," "The Borrowers," and the Little House series, as well as lesser known titles such as "Bronzeville Boys and Girls" and "Tom's Midnight Garden," the annotations are grouped according to realistic fiction, fantasy, poetry, folk, or various. (HOD)

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A TWO-WAY STREET  
READING TO WRITE  
WRITING TO READ

Using Literature to Generate Writing in the Elementary Classroom  
Grades K-6

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## INTRODUCTION

Two-Way Street: Reading to Write/Writing to Read was written by a team of Michigan teachers who advocate the use of children's literature to generate writing in the elementary classroom. We all believe that the regular inclusion of literature in the elementary curriculum can lead to a dynamic interaction and integration in the language arts--writing, reading, speaking, listening. Two-Way Street looks at ways to encourage and build upon this relationship as it advocates reading widely, and responding to reading with various activities that foster critical reading and critical thinking skills.

Two-Way Street provides an annotated bibliography of children's literature with classroom suggestions for the teacher. Some of the titles are well known and "classic" by anyone's definition--Charlotte's Web, The Borrowers, The Little House. Some are less well known but favorites among the teachers in this group--Cooper's Under Sea, Over Stone, Brooks' Bronzeville Boys and Girls, Pearce's Tom's Midnight Garden. Some are old; some are new. But all were chosen with the enjoyment of the child in mind.

## CLASSROOM SUGGESTIONS

The classroom suggestions are often overwhelming--too many for each book, but we wanted to get the reader/teacher thinking, making connections. In the case of each book, we encourage you to be selective, to make adaptations for your group. Consider modifying activities suggested for one book to use with another. None of this is etched in stone. Adjust activities to fit your situation--adapt from book to book, from level to level. Don't discount using picture books or ABC's with the upper grades (perhaps in the context of creating library materials for the preschool or first grade; perhaps as a study in visual literacy). Don't overlook the possibility of reading aloud some of the more complex novels to the younger grades, or the possibilities of reading aloud on every level. Children often have reading interests and listening comprehension skills grade levels above their reading abilities. But reading aloud is a plus even for the good readers. Share the pleasures of language and literature: the "voices" of characters; the dramatic rhythms of the prose; the language play and manipulation.

Remember to bring the reader BACK to the text. After following up subjects introduced in the novel with research, or personalizing feelings of a character through role playing, or exploring ideas in writing, bring the newly informed reader back to the book. Don't use the literature for motivation to another area of the curriculum without letting that other area enrich the reading. Keep the two-way street open. For example, if you spin off into the geography of Canada, nature study of indigenous animals and plants, and environmental concerns while reading The Incredible Journey, lead the class back to the novel to look with an informed eye at Sheila Burnford's use of setting--how accurate is she? how symbolic is the landscape? Let the class write a critique with this information. Let them model Burnford's use of fact to create symbol. Help the student "connect" with the literature. Use this process of integrating the language arts to help them read with thought, proficiency, and pleasure.

## WRITING

The teachers who created the activities for the literature selections in the book discussed and agreed upon a philosophy of writing. Although the suggestions are as varied as our personalities and experiences, we wanted the writing ideas to be based on a common philosophy and set of expectations.

1. It is our belief that children should have a wide variety of writing experiences and they should write every day. By providing a wealth of activities children will gain confidence in their writing ability. Writing poetry, business letters, plays, news reports, and stories allows children to explore many styles and reasons for writing.

2. Writing should be an integral part of the curriculum so that writing occurs throughout the school day, not just during the language arts.

3. An environment of trust and acceptance is necessary so that children need not be afraid of putting their thoughts and feelings on paper.

4. Prewriting is a vital part of the writing process, so that time needs to be allotted for children to think and talk about the writing activity. Prewriting activities may take a variety of forms, many of which are included in this book. A few examples are: creative dramatics, discussion, journal writing, list making, language play, art work, film viewing.

5. Young children love to write. We as teachers should encourage kindergartners and first graders to express themselves in writing, without being critical of spelling and punctuation errors.

6. Children beyond first grade should be taught to value correct spelling and punctuation for writing that will have an audience outside the classroom.

7. Not all writing should be taken to an edited, polished final version. Children should be encouraged to write for a variety of purposes and audiences. Some of their writing can be for their eyes only. Some of their writing can be notes and lists that serve as reference points for later work, but that are not edited and polished for public sharing. Some of their writing should be edited by them, with corrections made on the paper, but not fully revised and recopied. Some of their writing should go through a process of peer evaluation and formal editing for sharing with a "public" audience--letters to the editor, class books, narrative murals and the like.

## A PHILOSOPHY OF REVISION

Striking a balance between teaching children revision techniques and helping them to enjoy writing is facilitated by requiring that only one piece of writing a month be revised. This arrangement assures that there will be time for more writing and consequently for a wider variety of writing activities. Revising every piece of writing takes time; time that could be spent writing. Our school year, or even day, seems to fly by without giving us an opportunity to cover all the variety of writing ideas we want to share with children. Also, children don't need that much practice to revise and recopy. If children are required to revise a piece of writing (Note: In general, first graders should not be required to revise.) about once a month, they will, by the end of the year, be

quite knowledgeable about the revision process. Deciding on which writing activity will be revised, allows both teacher and the students, to try all kinds of writing, to explore different styles and voice and not be bogged down with polishing a piece of writing that was an experiment. Evaluation of experimental writing discourages children and frustrates teachers.

Usually the writing associated with a project or unit is a good choice for the item to be revised. For instance, if the children are reading Nancy Stone's Dune Shadow and, as a culmination of the unit, the author comes to speak to the class, a writing activity may be a letter of invitation, a news story of her visit, or a "new" chapter for the novel. Or a two or three week unit on poetry may include the children writing poems. Selected poems could be revised and included in a class book or displayed on a bulletin board. During the novel unit or the poetry unit there would be many other occasions for writing but this major piece of writing would be the only one the children would revise.

### LEVELS OF WRITING

To avoid confusion for the children as to when revision is appropriate and when it isn't, it may be helpful to designate three levels of writing.

LEVEL ONE is writing that is done in class and time is not allotted for children to revise and edit their writing, nor would there be time to use dictionaries. Examples of this kind of writing would be answers to test questions, reactions to films, sensory stimulus writing. Also in this category would be writing that is done for practice, such as writing descriptive words, varying sentence beginnings, writing a variety of action words. Here the emphasis is on the content only. Did the student answer the question correctly? Are the reactions thoughtful? Is there a wider variety of words being used?

LEVEL TWO is when children have time to use dictionaries and time to read over what they have written, checking for errors. Usually corrections are of a mechanical nature. Children make corrections on the same paper and do not recopy. Examples of writing in this category would be short stories written in class, answers to study questions, character sketches, descriptions, and science experiments.

LEVEL THREE is writing that requires editing, revision and recopying. This writing will have an audience beyond the classroom. It could be a letter, a class book, or writing to be displayed on the walls.

### THE REVISION PROCESS

When it is appropriate for children to revise, a three-step process helps them to improve their writing. The first step is to have the paper read by the author. S/he should read it twice. The first time read it aloud looking for errors that were made in the haste of writing--misspellings, incorrect punctuation, left out words, and so on. The second reading should focus on changes in words and phrases, and organization. Directions for students are: Does it say what you wanted to say? Look at sentence beginnings. Change enough of them to add variety and interest. Look for vague descriptive words as "a lot" and "very." Change them so that they carry more information for the reader.

Young children should read through the paper two or three times, each time looking for just one aspect. For instance, first read for clear sentences, second time for capital letters, third for end punctuation.

The second step in the editing process is to have a friend read the paper. Let the students choose their own friend for the reader. Trust and respect are important for this stage to work well. Class time is devoted to the friend's reading and the students are instructed beforehand to pay particular attention to the content rather than spelling and punctuation. This is the time to ask questions about meaning, clarification, point of view. This is difficult for children to do, but with practice they become more adept. Tell them to help their friend write as interesting a paper as possible rather than concentrating on correctness.

The third step is for an adult to proofread the paper. This is usually a parent, but can be an older brother or sister--someone who knows about spelling and punctuation. It should not be the teacher, unless English is not spoken at home or if for some reason the parent is not comfortable with the proofreading task.

Going through a structure of revision, such as this, helps students value the importance of a polished piece of writing. They distinguish then between writing for practice and/or experimentation and writing for an audience beyond themselves and the teacher. In general, children do not like to revise, but if they are helped to see the purpose of this process, they will learn to do a careful job.

#### SELECTED THOUGHTS

1. Be selective when you decide which activities you are going to use with a single book. Don't overdo it.
2. When using a book as motivation for some other part of the curriculum, bring the reader back to the book with his/her new knowledge.
3. Have a variety of children's literature available in your classroom, and read aloud often.
4. Be sure to include a variety of writing in your classroom curriculum.
5. Be sure to encourage writing for a variety of audiences--peers, other classes, adults, teacher's eyes only, self-only, outside eye (letters to the editor) and the like.
6. Prewriting activities can be an end in themselves.
7. Remember not all writing has to be edited.
8. When you send letters to authors, include a Self-Addressed-Stamped-Envelope.
9. Don't create a double standard. If you expect your children to write, you should write too. Display your writing with that of your students.

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Burnford, Sheila. The Incredible Journey. Little, Brown, 1961. (Bantam)

The Hunter family goes on an extended trip and leaves the family pets with John Longridge. Longridge lives 250 miles away from the Hunter family residence. After several months the pets run away, back to their home. The rest of the story tells of the adventures the pets have on their homeward journey.

This realistic animal fiction shows the bonds of friendship that animals can have for each other and for people, too. Burnford has brought her animal and human characters through natural, believable experiences that make the reader not want to put the book down until completion.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Research. Find out about each of the kinds of animals read about. Have the children find pictures of each animal and make a chart of its characteristics. Let them explore the text for specific examples of how each animal reflects the breed's characteristics.
2. Writing. Have the children write a newscast for radio or TV or a series of articles for the newspaper: news release reporting the loss; a follow-up story covering sightings, interviews, local and provincial government involvement; the happy reunion.
3. Writing/Ads. Bring in the classified ad section of the newspaper. Discuss how and why the wording is done differently in this section of the paper. Then have the children write a classified ad that each of the Hunters or Longridge might have placed in the newspaper.
4. Prewriting. Create a new character who spotted the animals. Tell of the experiences the animals might have had with this character. Have the character write a letter to Longridge or one of the Hunters after he/she learns of the "whole" story from the newspapers or TV.
5. Writing/Letters. Have children write letters to Longridge or the Hunters from people who are sympathetic towards them: the humane society, hunters, cat lovers, kennel club members or dog owners.

Have the children write letters to the editor from people who are not sympathetic. Examples: people who hate dogs/cats; people who are upset that public money has been used to help find the animals; people who are upset at the destruction of their property by the animals or other animals.

Have the children write letters from companies or other places of business that might write to Longridge or the Hunters because of the report they read or heard in the media. These letters should be sympathetic toward the addressee and offer their products or services to them to help insure the Hunters or Longridge won't have the problem again. Examples: kennels, fence company, leash manufacturers, private investigators.

Have the children write letters from companies wanting to use the dogs or the cat for advertising purposes.



Dahl, Roald. Danny, The Champion of the World. Knopf, 1975.  
(Bantam)

Danny says, "My father, without the slightest doubt, was the most marvelous and exciting father any boy ever had." This is the story of Danny and his wonderful father and the adventures they get caught up in together.

Danny discovers his father's long hidden secret and becomes a partner with his father in a hilarious plot to embarrass the town's biggest snob. Danny does have to deal with the illegality of his father's secret but by the end of the book they are back to such safe and legal adventure as trout fishing.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Writing. Have the class make a list or discuss all the fun things Danny's father does with him.

Engage them in a discussion: Which of those fun things would you most like to do with your parents? Write about that or write about what you would most like to do with one or both of your parents. It could be a place you'd like to go with them, an activity you'd like to do, or a talk you'd like to have with them.

2. Writing. Encourage students to: Invent a secret that your family has been hiding for years. Examples: Grandpa went to prison, Grandma made illegal whiskey, your mother is really a princess, you are related to a Rockefeller, you have a buried treasure in your backyard, you know where hidden treasure is buried, your uncle owns a business that is the state's biggest polluter, your ancestors were dwarfs. Write about the secret and the impact of the secret on the family.

3. Prewriting/Writing. Danny's father tells bedtime stories about the Big Friendly Giant. Ask: What kind of things does the Big Friendly Giant do? Discuss as many things about the giant as you remember.

Have the class create another adventure of the Big Friendly Giant. Write it down. When each member of the class has written an adventure, encourage peer editing, and make a booklet of them.

4. Prewriting/Writing. Have the class discuss the way Danny was treated by his teacher: Have you every felt mistreated by a teacher? How did your parents react to it? Imagine that Danny's father tells his teacher what Danny thinks of him. Write down what Danny's father said to the teacher and how the teacher responded.

5. Prewriting. According to our standards, Danny is an economically deprived child. He lives in a one-room gypsy wagon, has an outside toilet, and has few possessions.

List the things Danny has and the things he doesn't have.

Ask: Do you think Danny is a deprived child? Why or why not.



6. Prewriting/Writing/Editing. Discuss the ways Danny's father knew of how to poach. Also what ways did Mr. Hazell have to catch poachers?

Make up a booklet entitled "How to Successfully Poach." On each page describe one way birds can be caught.

OR, make up a booklet entitled "How to Catch Poachers." On each page describe one method used in the book and invent five new ways such as the use of nets, traps or warning systems.

7. Prewriting/Writing/Editorial/Editing. Discuss or list some illegal things, usually ignored by law enforcers, that people in our country do. (Examples: under-age smoking, hitchhiking, driving over 55). Ask: Do you believe any of these should be ignored or should they be enforced? Back up your answers with solid reasons.

Students who are interested could write an editorial stating their opinion on the uneven enforcement of laws. When the editorial is finished, it could be submitted to the school paper or read aloud to the class and discussed.

8. Research/Report Writing. Research and write a report on pheasants or on some aspects of poaching. With this new information, have individuals report back to the class about feelings on the way the author treats poaching in this book.

9. Prewriting/Writing. Discuss Mr. Hazell's reaction to what happened to him and how he felt about two hundred missing pheasants.

Have interested individuals write a news story or an editorial from Mr. Hazell's point of view about what happened. Imagine that he is able to broadcast his story over the radio that night. Make it powerful, cutting and emotional. Read it to the class.

Imagine that Mr. Hazell is so mad about his loss of birds that he places an ad in the paper offering a reward for information leading to the arrest of the culprit. What would he say to induce others to turn the thief in and what would he offer as a reward? Have the class write ads.

Fitzgerald, John D. The Great Brain. Ill. Mercer Mayer. Dial, 1967.  
(Dell)

The Great Brain is the first in a series of books loosely based on the exploits of John D. Fitzgerald's older brother Tom in Utah in the 1890's. Tom's money-loving heart has caused his brothers and friends to label him "the Youngest Confidence Man in all Utah." He seems to devise a plan to gain a financial reward from any situation. His schemes and swindles are a constant thorn in the side of the entire community.

Children from the third to sixth grade will thoroughly enjoy these humorous adventures. The stories are not only filled with fun and surprises, they also contain many historic and interesting facts. Mr. Fitzgerald helps children to appreciate the rewards and advantages of old fashioned common sense.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Writing. Engage the class in an investigation of the character of Tom in the novel. What qualities does Tom have which enable him to out-smart grown-ups as well as kids? How does the setting influence him?

Let this discussion lead to the discussion of some of the other characters. Then ask the class to write a character sketch of one of these other characters in the book. Feelings and reactions of some of Tom's victims might be of interest. Let them try describing one of Tom's schemes from the point of view of the victim.

2. Prewriting/Drama/Writing. Pick an adventure from the book and write it as a play. Or do it as a reader's theater. Create another adventure for these characters based on an original scheme or swindle.

3. Prewriting/Research. A discussion of how important the time and setting are for this story might lead to some research on the Mormon religion.

4. Writing. Write a short prediction of Tom's future. When he becomes an adult will his "money loving heart" cause trouble with the law for Tom?

5. Extensions. Students who have enjoyed this adventure will also enjoy the following books: More Adventures of the Great Brain, The Great Brain at the Academy, Me and My Little Brain, The Great Brain Reforms, The Return of the Great Brain and The Great Brain Does It Again.

Fitzhugh, Louise. Harriet, the Spy. Harper and Row, 1964. (Dell)

Harriet is a precocious eleven year-old girl who has difficulty in relating to her parents who are too busy with their social activities to find time for her. Harriet, a fiercely individualistic, non-conforming child, explores life on her own through her spy notebook where she records with brutal honesty her impressions of her family, friends, and neighborhood characters. Her classmates find her journal and form a "Spy Catchers Club" to retaliate against her. This is a humorous story written in a third-person narrative and through the device of Harriet's diary.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Observation. Have the students establish their own "spy route" for a week limiting their observations to and from school. Investigate questions like those of PRIVACY.
2. Prewriting/Writing. Take a few minutes at the end of the day to reflect on the following: (1) Did I fail to do something that I promised to do today? (2) Did I do something nice for someone today? Write a paragraph with a self-evaluation of your peer relationships for the day.
3. Prewriting. Discuss emotional behavior and ways in which it is expressed. Have the students talk about the different kinds of feelings humans may have: love, hate, happiness and so on. In what ways did Harriet show these emotions throughout the book?
4. Writing/Collecting Information. Have students keep a journal and record their experiences from home, school, work, play, church, friends' houses and other settings.
5. Writing/Character Study. How well do you think you know someone? Harriet was hurt by the treatment she received from her classmates after they discovered her journal and she feels the whole world hates her. She makes the statement: "I wish I were dead."

Interview a friend or classmate, collect information, and create a character study for that person. Ask questions such as: (1) favorite color; (2) favorite meal; (3) How do you act when you are upset? (happy?); (4) What would you change about yourself physically? (5) favorite TV shows; (6) most important people in your life; (7) happiest experience; (8) saddest memory; (9) How do you spend weekends? (10) What worries you? (11) What do you like (dislike) about yourself and other people . . . and so forth.

6. Writing. Harriet gains some understanding and wisdom about her actions and prints a retraction of her statements in the school news. Have students consider: What kind of apology or retraction would you write for the school news if you were in Harriet's place?

7. Extensions. Readers who have enjoyed this book might also enjoy:

Other books about Harriet and her friends by Fitzhugh such as The Long Secret and Sport;

Other realistic fiction such as Queenie Peavy by Robert Burch; Blubber by Judy Blume; The Hundred Dresses by Eleanor Estes; and How to Eat Fried Worms by Thomas Rockwell.

Fox, Paula. The Stone Faced Boy. Ill. Donald MacKay. Bradbury, 1968.

Gus, a fifth grader and the middle child feels that he not an integral part of his family structure. He is a shy, withdrawn boy who is unable to express himself so he hides behind an expressionless face labeled "Stone Face."

The humor and wisdom of his Great Aunt Hattie and Gus' rescue of a stray dog caught in a foxtrap during a snowstorm bring him out of his shell and to the realization that he can rise above his fears and mistakes and become a person in his own right.

This poignant story focuses on Gus' poor self-concept and the problems of loneliness and misunderstanding by others.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Writing. Gus tries to reconstruct the circumstances which led to his "Stone Face" nickname. Engage the class in a discussion of nicknames. How did they get them? How do they feel about them?

2. Writing. Gus was unable to express emotion through the use of facial gestures. Initially, this was beneficial to him as he was pleased with the reactions of others to him as he demonstrated that he was not affected by their teasing. However, as a result of practicing this kind of behavior repeatedly, his "face seemed to have stuck" and he was unable to smile even when he received an "A" on an English paper. Have the class write about the emotions, feelings, and expressions, verbal or otherwise, that are part of defense mechanisms in relating to people and to the world. This can be informal, personal writing to be shared on small peer groups or to be "eyes only" for the teacher.

While walking home from school through the countryside after a blizzard, Gus begins to think about the wonderful sounds, smells and feelings awaiting him at home (hot cocoa, buttery toast, "thawing of the tip of his nose and frozen fingers") and panic sets in when he realizes that he cannot even grin.

3. Writing. Gus' Great Aunt Hattie pays an unexpected visit to the family. She senses that there is something behind the mask that Gus is wearing and is able to, through humor and insights, help Gus to resolve his problem. Have the class write about that special person in their lives who has been able to give them the support and understanding that has helped them to overcome a special problem, concern, or worry.

4. Prewriting/Writing. The geode stone that Aunt Hattie gives Gus is symbolic. Every person had their own sparkle from within, but sometimes it is necessary to help others to bring this potential to the surface in order that they may become a fully self-actualizing person. Gus comes to his moment of maturity when his brother asks him to break open the geode and see what it's like inside. Gus knows about the symbolic crystals inside and chooses to open it privately and with great care. Ask students: How would you bring out the "sparkle" in another person? Write about some strategies that you would use to bring someone out of their shell.

5. Extensions Readers who enjoyed this novel and reading about relationships within a family might also enjoy: Up a Road Slowly by Irene Hunt; A Trick of Light by Barbara Corcoran; Just Me by Marie Hall Ets; My Brother Stevie by Eleanor Clymer.

Horvath, Betty F. Hooray for Jasper. Franklin Watts, 1966.  
Jasper Makes Music. Franklin Watts, 1967.  
Will the Real Tommy Wilson Please Stand Up? Franklin Watts,  
1969.

In Hooray for Jasper, Jasper feels he is too little. He tries eating more and working more after his parents' suggestions. Instead of getting bigger, he gets an upset stomach and blisters. His grandfather tells him he will grow when he does something wonderful. Jasper's direct attempts fail. Then he selflessly saves a kitten from high in a tree that bigger boys could not climb and discovers both the advantage of his size and the feeling of growth which had eluded him before.

In Jasper Makes Music, Jasper is denied the guitar in the window of Anderson's Music Store and given shoes instead. The cigar box guitar that his brother and he construct just doesn't sound like a real guitar. While helping his grandfather clean the cellar Jasper discovers the magic snow shovel that once made his father's wish for a bicycle come true. When the snow falls, Jasper begins to work the charm that will provide enough money for a guitar by springtime.

Tommy Wilson in Will the Real Tommy Wilson Please Stand Up? likes being himself, living with his family in the center of the world. (He could tell from the way the sun rose and set right at his own house.) When Tommy begins the first grade and learns that the center of the world is actually at Brian Hopper's house, he feels off balance. To compensate, he grows increasingly like Brian and less like himself. Then after a case of mistaken identity, Tommy begins once again to appreciate and assert his individuality.

Betty Horvath, an author from Michigan living in Kalamazoo, deals with the frustration of children's impatience in the Jasper stories and peer pressure in Tommy Wilson. Jasper's elderly grandfather provides the wisdom and understanding that Jasper did not find elsewhere. At the same time Jasper learns to do for himself what he can while he waits. Tommy learns that friends are not always more right than one is oneself.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Listing. Good writers make plans for stories. Sometimes they do this mentally and sometimes in writing. One way of collecting and organizing ideas is to make a list of words, phrases, or ideas. Jasper is disappointed about being too small and having no guitar. What other ideas might Mrs. Horvath have thought about using in her stories--things that would have disappointed Jasper? Write a list of ideas. This can be done individually and shared afterward or done as a group and recorded on the chalkboard.

2. Prewriting/Writing. Grandfather gave Jasper suggestions that he could follow to help himself. What might Jasper have done instead that would have helped him just as much? Make a list of notes about story ideas. Can you write a story about Jasper from one of these ideas?

Try something else. What might Jasper have done that would have helped him less than Grandfather's ideas?

3. Prewriting/Writing. Often in stories, words or happenings occur in sets of three. In Tommy Wilson, Tommy describes his house thus: "It was where the rain was the silveryest and the snow was the whitest and the birds sang the sweetest." Ask the class to investigate: What are three things that Tommy said were at his house? What word did he use to tell about each one of them?

Then initiate this structure: What are three things that are at your house that make it special? Write them down. What word could you use to tell how each one is special? Write these words beside the first words. Write each one in a sentence. Write a paragraph about your special house.

4. Prewriting. In Tommy Wilson there are many ways that Tommy and Brian are alike to begin with, and become more alike, and are different from one another. Make a list of words or groups of words that tell how Tommy and Brian were alike. Make a list that tells how they were not alike. Make a list that tells how they became more alike.

Have the students personalize this assignment: How is this story like you? Make a list of ways in which you are like your friend. Make another list of ways in which you are unlike one another. Would you rather be the way you are or are there characteristics you would like to change? If you were Tommy, would you choose to remain like Brian or return to being more like your original self? Can you write a story about yourself and a friend who like to do some things in the same way but not everything.

Hutchins, Pat. Rosie's Walk. Macmillan, 1968. (Penguin)

Rosie is a fat, confident, busy hen and one day she decides to take a walk. What Rosie doesn't realize is that she is being followed by a wicked fox. Fortunately Rosie escapes, but she leads the fox into one disaster after another before she returns safely home.

Pat Hutchins' colorful drawings accompany a brief text and carry the momentum of the story forward to its climactic end. It is one of the first stories young children enjoy reading by themselves.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting. Discuss predatory animals and their search for food.
2. Prewriting. Rosie's walk takes her under, over, around and through. Explore the use of prepositions with your class. Have them create more adventures for Rosie. Where else might her walk take her? How might the fox be foiled?

A limited vocabulary book that also uses prepositions to create an exciting journey is Stan and Jan Berenstain's Bears in the Night. Use this book, or the Berenstain's On Spook Hill, as a follow-up for the class' expansion activities with Rosie's Walk.

3. Prewriting/Writing. Build an adventure for an imaginary pair of animals. This can be done as a class activity with the children seated together near a chalkboard. After choosing two animals, class members can give suggestions as to the places they will travel. After the words are typed or written on a long strip of paper, mural style, teams of children can illustrate the text.
4. Prewriting/Rhythm. Weston Woods (Weston CT) has produced an animated film version of this book. After reading the picture book and discussing the attitude and feelings of Rosie and the fox, ask the children to pantomime how each of the characters might walk. Then let them view the film. Did Gene Deitch (the director) interpret Rosie and the fox the same way the children did? How did the music suggest movement and rhythm? Was it appropriate?
5. Extension. Children who have enjoyed this book might also like some of the other books by Pat Hutchins. Changes, Changes is a wordless picture book about two wooden people who go on a journey that has also been made into a delightful film by Gene Deitch for Weston Woods.



Kellogg, Steven. Won't Somebody Play With Me? Dial, 1972. (Pied Piper)

It's Kim's birthday, but it begins as an especially lonely day. She visits all the apartments of her friends, and thinks of interesting things to do, but each stop ends in disappointment. The grand finale wraps up the story beautifully, and it easily predicted by eager listeners once they know it is Kim's birthday.

Kellogg's drawings are filled with humorous details and reflect a small child's reactions to life's experiences. For example, in one fantasy scene Kim is seen feeding a reluctant President Lincoln a huge forkful of spinach with the words: "Eat your spinach, Mr. Lincoln, or else no pancakes." How many times have children had to eat their "good" foods before receiving dessert or a more favorable entree?

### Classroom Suggestions

1. Writing/Letter/Editing. Authors enjoy hearing from their readers. When children have specific questions about a particular text, they should be encouraged to write and try to find out the answers. Authors will often have time to respond to a single letter although they maybe overwhelmed by a class set.

One way to write to an author is to send birthday letters. Steven Kellogg's birthday is October 6. After reading many of the author's books as a class, have children who want to join in the birthday greeting each write a single page letter and then bind them as a booklet. You can reach the author in care of his publisher. Letters will be forwarded to him.

Not all authors will find the time to respond to children's letters.

A listing of many authors' and illustrators' birthdays can be found in Beatrice Cullinan's Literature and the Child.

2. Extensions. Children you enjoyed this picture book by Steven Kellogg may also enjoy some of his other books such as The Island of the Skog, A Rose for Pinkerton, The Mysterious Tadpole.



Mason, Miriam E. Caroline and Her Kettle Named Maud. Macmillan, 1951.

As seven-year-old Caroline and her family prepare to move to Pigeon Roost, Michigan, Grandfather presents a gift to each member of the family. Like her seventeen uncles, Caroline hopes to receive a gun to carry into the wilderness. Instead, she is disappointed to receive a copper kettle which she names Maud, the name she had selected for her gun. With her kettle, Caroline captures the wolf that her uncles were unable to shoot. She trades the wolf for a gun named Sally. But when she has her picture taken to hang beside those of her other brave relatives, Caroline chooses calico, kettle, and cow over buckskin, rifle and horse that she admired before.

Caroline and her uncles may have been the first examples of sex-role stereotypes in Michigan. They outgrow the role types and develop their roles in the pioneer community to their own satisfaction. Caroline is thrust into situations of frustrations and change, but she learns to adjust and adapt to everything that confronts her in the pioneer times.

1. Prewriting. Engage the class in a discussion of other gifts that might have pleased Caroline more even if they weren't a gun. Make a list of them and have the students make a statement of explanation about their choice.

What gifts might have displeased Caroline equally while still being practical? Make a list of them.

2. Prewriting/Writing. Consider the difference in lifestyle between Caroline's time and your own. What activities, jobs, and tasks might Caroline have employed Maud to complete in early Michigan? Why was a copper kettle a wise choice on Grandfather's part? Make a list of ideas. Outline a story about them.

3. Writing. Considering Caroline's determination to work and participate in many activities, what other adventures might Caroline have with Maud? Write another chapter for the book. Will this chapter be added to the end or somewhere in the middle of the book?

4. Writing. Have the class update the story. Ask: What adventure might you have with a common household object like a spoon or a sweeper in an uncommon household situation. Caroline used Maud in an uncommon manner when the need arose. What might happen to you? What will you do? Write your story.

5. Prewriting/Writing. Think about the situations Caroline encountered or might have encountered. How might the story have been different if Caroline had received a gun instead of a kettle? Encourage the children to write a story about Caroline and her gun named Maud.

6. Extension. If your students enjoyed this story, they may want to read The Courage of Sarah Noble by Alice Dalgleish. Although Sarah was expected to assume more responsibility than most current children of her age, the things she was allowed and expected to do fall into a narrower range according to the girl's role of that time. Be sure to explain that the attitude expressed toward the Native Americans in the story by other characters reflects an attitude that was acceptable at one time, but was never truly fair. Allow the children to look for examples of prejudice.

Rawls, Wilson. Where the Red Fern Grows. Doubleday, 1961. (Bantam)

This is a warm, moving story of Billy and his two coon hounds, Little Ann and Old Dan. These hounds develop an intense and loyal relationship with Billy, through the love and care he shows them. This relationship grows through the sharing of adventures, as well as tragedies. In the end, Billy is saddened but strengthened because of these remarkable dogs.

This story is exciting, fast paced, and very touching. Billy's grit and determination make him a strong role model for students. This is one of the most endearing dog stories of all time.

### Classroom Suggestions

1. Writing. Have students write an alphabet book that illustrates their understanding of the story. Emphasize that descriptive sentences or sentences with qualifiers are preferred. Subject-verb-object sentences are discouraged. Examples:

A is for Little Ann so smart and so loyal.

B is for the Beauty of Billy's devotion to his dogs and his family.

C is for the Clever ways that the ghost coon had escaped the jaws of the hounds.

2. Prewriting/Writing. When Billy goes to town to pick up his pups at the railroad station, he encounters all kinds of new experiences. He has never seen a school building, or a fire escape, or himself in a mirror, or had a bottle of pop and so on. What other experiences were new for Billy? How did the kids in town react to Billy? In what way was he different from them?

Ask students to: Describe a new situation you found yourself in or a new experience you had. It could be your first day at a new school, meeting relatives for the first time, going to a new city, going to an amusement park for the first time, learning to horseback ride or play tennis and so on.

Ask them to: Write down your impressions of what the setting (place) looked like the first time you saw it. Then describe how you felt in the situation, what you did, and how others responded to you.

3. Prewriting. Have the students complete each of these eight ideas with material growing out of the book: This book made me wish that . . . , realize that . . . , describe that . . . , wonder about . . . , see that . . . , believe that . . . , feel that . . . , and hope that . . . .

4. Writing/Editing. Have especially involved students write a letter to Wilson Rawls (in care of the publisher) telling him how they reacted to his book. Use some of the ideas in #3 above to encourage specific detail. When the letter is edited, have a student recopy it, proofread it and mail it to Mr. Rawls.

5. Prewriting. After reading the first three chapters of the book, discuss why Billy wanted his dogs so desperately. Ask: Have you ever wanted anything badly? Something material? Something abstract like happiness or having a friend and so forth?

Make a wanted poster of something you want.

6. Prewriting/Newspaper/Editing. Discuss the Championship Coon Hunt. Explain what a news story, an editorial and a feature article are. Then have each student compose a one or two page newspaper focusing on the events that occurred in the Championship Coon Hunt. Each student should include a news story (usually centering on the winner), a feature article that could be about Billy or his grandfather or father, and an editorial stating an opinion on the strengths showed by Billy and his dogs in the Championship. Newspapers need a masthead, price, headline, publisher and so forth.

After editing and proofreading the material, students can put their newspapers on dittos and run off enough copies for the class. Class critiques of individual newspapers can follow.

7. Prewriting/Writing/Obituary. Have students list as many words as they can (on the board or individually) that describe (1) Little Ann and (2) Old Dan.

Have students compose an obituary for either Old Dan or Little Ann that could appear in a newspaper. State age of dog, cause of death, what each dog accomplished in life, where it lived, what it will be remembered for, survivors and funeral arrangements.

Steptoe, John. Stevie. Harper and Row, 1969.

This book portrays a friendship which develops when Stevie comes to stay with Robert's mother while his own mother works. In the beginning, Robert is openly resentful of the newcomer's intrusion into his family. When Stevie's mother abruptly takes him away, Robert realizes that they have shared some good times together and that Stevie has become like a little brother to him.

Steptoe was only seventeen when he created this story and its illustrations. Each bold and striking illustration is a unique painting supporting the text.

### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Language. Hearing the sound of language in its different social context is one of the benefits of reading books aloud. No one standard form is appropriate in all contexts and students can explore the variation in language by comparing differences in dialogue found in books from various social groups.

Stevie is a fine example of Black English which can be read aloud to students: "Sometimes people get on your nerves and they don't mean it or nothin' but they just bother you. Why I gotta put up with him? My momma only had one kid. I used to have a lot of fun before old stupid came to live with us."

2. Prewriting/Writing. Becoming a young author need not be a frustrating experience if children begin by writing stories about their own family and friends. Steptoe as a Black author vividly creates a Black family using the dialect found in his community.

Other authors have often reached into their own past for inspiration. Examples of this are found in the work of Tomie de Paola. Oliver Button is a Sissy reflects his childhood love of tap-dancing, while Chicken Feet in the Soup, and Nanna Upstairs, Nanna Downstairs relates his memories of grandmothers from his Italian and Irish sides of the family.

Encourage children to record their experiences in story form as these professional authors do.

3. Extensions. Children who enjoyed this book may enjoy reading others set in the city. John Steptoe has also written Train Ride. Ezra Jack Keats has many books that focus on Peter and his friends: A Snowy Day, Whistle For Willie, Goggles, Pet Show, Apt. 3.

Madeline and Madeline's Rescue are set in Paris. Make Way for Ducklings takes place in Boston. Help children to explore many cities and many cultures.

Stone, Nancy. Dune Shadow. Houghton Mifflin, 1980.

The shifting sands of the denuded shoreline along Lake Michigan near St. Joseph in the 1850's are turning the once-thriving logging village of Calash into a ghost town. The parents of 13-year-old Serena decide to seek work elsewhere in the growing lumbering industry, leaving Serena behind in the care of her aged grandmother. By late September, Serena, Granny, and a little neighbor girl, Jody, are the only people still in the village. Although winter is coming on, Granny refuses to move to St. Joseph, in spite of Serena's urging. Serena has been specially instructed to be helpful and obedient to Granny, but, as the days pass, she comes to realize that Granny's mind is going and that, if the three of them are to survive, it is up to Serena herself to see to it. After a section of the dune topples, destroying a corner of their house, their situation becomes acute, and Serena's struggle for food, fuel, a place to live, and particularly a way of getting them out of the village before deep winter sets in makes for a suspenseful account which builds in intensity and grips to the very last page.

The author keeps the reader aware of Serena's powerful opponents--time and the sand. Serena is a strong protagonist, staunch, resourceful, and decisive. The family relationships are warm and true, and the dialogue sounds as though real people are speaking it. The style is straightforward and unpretentious, and this phase of the logging era in the western part of the state is powerfully recreated in human terms. The book carries the conviction that comes from intensive, painstaking research. Mrs. Stone lives in Kalamazoo and is well acquainted with the area in which the book is set.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Writing. Consider the three main characters one by one. Find and read aloud passages which show what each is like. Put their names on the board and after them write adjectives describing each one. Are they convincing as characters? Why, or why not? Write a paragraph in which you argue for or against a particular character's believability, citing passages to defend your stance.
2. Characterization/Note Taking/Writing. Consider how the characters function in the novel. Serena is the protagonist. Encourage the class to discuss why she is the protagonist. What makes her so? Find passages to support her function. Serena is also a dynamic character. She changes as a result of her experiences. Cite passages to show how this is so. Jody serves as a foil for Serena, and to some extent she also influences the plot. Is Granny a dynamic or static (fixed, unchanging) character? How does she affect the action? Take notes on your observations about the characters in this way, and develop one of them into a short paper.
3. Plot/Writing. Consider the plot problem. What is the conflict? Is it the protagonist against herself, another person, society, or nature? Or is it some combination of these? If a combination, which is dominant? Pretend that you are Serena in Calash after the move to the bank. Pretend that as Serena you are able to write a letter to your parents. What would you say to them about the nature of your problems? What would you say to them about how you feel about your problems?

4. Time/Writing. It is important to keep track of time in this novel. Have the class together list the most important events in chronological order and work out as best they can how much time elapses between each and how much total time elapses; in other words, make a kind of time line for the novel. Why is it important to keep track of time in the story? What is the relationship between time and the plot problem? Add a postscript to your letter of #3 above in which you make clear to your parents how time is a critical factor in your survival.

5. Setting/Writing. The novel is set in an area of sand dunes, one of which threatens to engulf the village. In stories, settings can be backdrops for action, they can be integral to the plot, or they can influence the action. In Dune Shadow, the setting functions as a kind of character to affect events. Have students find places in the story where the dune influences the course of the story. Which event has the most impact on what happens?

Pretend that you are Serena, many years later, and tell your grandchildren about how scary the dune was, and how it became more scary as the fall advanced into winter. Describe for them the most scary thing the dune does. Write out what you would say to them.

6. Setting/Listing. How do you know this story takes place in times past? Have students read carefully for details that show that this story belongs in the past. List them in one column, and in another parallel one, details of how things would be done today.

7. Writing. Write another chapter which takes Serena, Jody, and Granny to Mercerville. Before writing, discuss what might happen along the way, and make an outline of those events that you will include in your chapter.

8. Writing. What happened in Calash is representative of what happened to many towns along the shore of Lake Michigan. Have students pretend the events really happened. Pretend you live on or near a dune by Lake Michigan. Argue from the history of Calash as presented in Stone's novel in a letter you write to the governor of Michigan protesting against a developer's decision to log off the trees on your dune and to put in an amusement park featuring dune rides.

9. Extensions. The class might enjoy seeing how setting can function in other books. Read Winnie-the-Pooh by A. A. Milne for an example of setting as a backdrop, Johnny Tremain by Esther Forbes and The Witch of Blackbird Pond by Elizabeth Speare for examples of integral settings, and The Intruder by John Rowe Townsend for an example of a setting that functions almost as another character.

10. Extensions. Students who enjoyed Dune Shadow might enjoy:

Other novels by Nancy Stone such as Whistle Up the Bay based on what really happened to a family in the Traverse Bay area, and The Wooden River, both set against the background of the logging industry.

Other survival (human against nature) stories such as Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell, Call It Courage by Armstrong Sperry, and Julie of the Wolves and My Side of the Mountain by Jean George.

Other books of historical fiction set in Michigan with strong female protagonists such as Where the Turnpike Starts by Harriett Carr (set near Hillsdale in the mid-1800's) and the books about Caroline by Miriam Mason.

Other books about the lumbering era in Michigan such as The Eagle Pine by Dirk Gringhuis and Whispering Trees by Arthur Kerle.



Taylor, Mildred D. Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry. Dial, 1976. (Bantam)

This is the story of Cassie Logan, a nine-year-old Black girl, and her family's struggle for survival in the rural South during the Depression.

Cassie is irrepressible, outspoken, and outraged by her contacts with whites who assume their superiority. Her strong, close-knit family helps her understand her blackness in the South without crushing her spirit or speaking with bitterness and hatred.

This book has a lot of action, many encounters, and many touching moments which keep the young reader engrossed. Miss Taylor is a master storyteller who quickly enfolds the reader in the fabric of her story.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting. Have students, after reading half or all of the book, choose between five and eight characters and list all of the things they know about these characters. Include what they look like, adjectives describing what they're like, and actions they take that tell us what they're like. Students can work in groups or individually.
2. Prewriting. Discuss: If you could meet one of the characters in the book, which one would you like to meet and what questions would you ask? Why?
3. Prewriting/Writing/Editing. Think about the characters in the book. Think of the strong ones as well as the despicable ones. Choose an outstanding characteristic of one character and present an award to that person. It can be negative or positive. You can award a medal to "Most Prejudiced Person" or "Most Loyal Person," and so on. Decide what your award will be and write two or three paragraphs explaining why you presented the award you did.

When all awards have been proofread, have each student recopy his or her work, affix some type of award ribbon, and put it in a classroom book.

OR, Write up the award as a news release.

4. Prewriting. After reading the first chapter of the book, discuss Miss Crocker's actions. Have you ever been in a situation with a teacher similar to the one described? What kind of feelings did you have? Most students will have many examples of unbending teachers to share.
5. Writing. Write a diary entry from the point of view of Cassie Logan about the first day of school. Include her reaction to going to school, how she felt about the whites' school bus running them off the road, how she reacted to Mary Lou Willever, how she felt about T. J. and his treatment of his brother, how she responded to Little Man and his dilemma about accepting a ragged book, and what she thought of Mama's reactions to their "whippings."
6. Prewriting. Working in groups or alone, have students go through the book and choose a quotation which they feel represents each major character. Have students write each quotation on an index card with the name of the person who said it on the back. This works as a review and also helps students understand characters.

7. Social Studies/Research/Report Writing. Have the class do research and write a report on one of the following topics: sharecropping, the depression and how it affected people, reconstruction, carpetbaggers, lynching, the Confederacy. After making the report, have individuals tell the class if they think the author did a good job portraying their topic in the book.

8. Prewriting/Writing. In this book several people get "in trouble." Stacey takes a whipping rather than squeal on T. J.. Later he decides to go to the Wallace Store and take his punishment rather than let T. J. get away from him. Can you remember a time you made a decision and got "in trouble" for it? It could be a time you got yelled at, got punished at home, lost a friend because of your actions, were suspended from school, and so on.

Write about a time you made a decision that got you "in trouble." Explain why you did what you did. What happened and how you reacted to the whole experience.

9. Extension. If you enjoyed this book, you might also enjoy Mildred Taylor's sequel, Let the Circle Be Unbroken or Words By Heart by Ouida Sebestyen.



Viorst, Judith. Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day.

Ill. Ray Cruz. Atheneum, 1977.

Alexander could tell it was going to be a disastrous day, when he woke up and found gum stuck in his hair, and he remembered that he had gone to bed with the gum in his mouth. By the time he reached the breakfast table, he had fallen over his skateboard and dropped his sweater in the sink. Everything continues to go wrong all the way to bedtime when he has to wear his hated railroad-train pajamas and the cat decides to abandon his bed in favor of brother Anthony's.

Everyone has days when everything goes wrong and Viorst collects them all into one remarkable day. Cruz's drawings add to Alexander's mood and feelings, as he moves from one problem to another.

### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Writing. In a group, children can list times when they thought everything was going wrong for them. Viorst's book is a stimulus for discussing a "rough" day in the classroom and realizing some days are like that. Perhaps suggestions can be made so that those days don't happen again.

Discuss the expression, "Getting up on the wrong side of the bed." Collect things that have happened to class members on bad days. Make up an imaginary character and put the ideas into a class book.

2. Writing/Style. Have older children brainstorm in a discussion like that of activity # 1, but have them write their story in the style of Viorst. They could use their own bad experiences. Have several of the other Viorst Anthony and Alexander books on hand to investigate her style more fully, before final drafts.

3. Writing/Extension. Again for older children: create a "Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day" at school. Divide the class into groups that represent every grade level in the school and write the story for a child that would be in that grade. Example: The group who will be writing for the first grade level might want to use situations like forgetting to go to the reading group, erasing through the paper, spilling all the math rods while the teacher was reading to the class.

4. Extensions. If your class enjoyed this book, they might enjoy exploring: Alexander Who Used To Be Rich Last Sunday, by Judith Viorst (a further adventure of Alexander who has just as much trouble scheming to be rich);

Ramona and Her Mother by Beverly Cleary (Chapters Three and Four describe a day when everything goes wrong for Ramona. Children can empathize with Ramona, and find that their own feelings are stirred as they relate to a little girl who always seems to get in trouble.);

Today Was a Terrible Day by Patricia Reilly Grifff (This bad day has a happy ending.).

Yep, Laurence. Child of the Owl. Harper and Row, 1977. (Dell)

When Casey's father ends up in the hospital, she is sent to her grandmother in Chinatown. Here Casey gets a crash course in what it means to be Chinese. This high-spirited, sassy girl meets her very traditional Chinese grandmother, who is not put off by her behavior. From her, Casey learns about her culture. Casey also learns to accept who she is.

1. Prewriting/Writing. Have students discuss what they believe to be the biggest problem Casey has to face. (self acceptance? getting used to a new home? acceptance of culture? acceptance of her father?).

Encourage them to write about the biggest problem they've ever had to face in their life. It could be a problem with family, with friends, with school, in liking themselves, and so forth.

2. Prewriting. Have the class discuss or list all of the comforting advice they would give to Casey when she found out she would have to be separated from her father. Ask: If for some reason you could no longer live with your family, where do you think you would have to go to live? Would a relative take you in? A friend? What would be different about living there and what problems do you envision might arise? What part of the experience would be most difficult for you?

3. Writing. Have the class make a short booklet entitled "Paw Paw's Wisdom." Ask individuals to write down at least ten things (quotes) that Paw Paw said, and what she means by each quote.

4. Writing. Paw Paw tells the folktale of the owl charm. Discuss: Do you have a family heirloom in your family or something you own that is very important to you? Create a story explaining its presence in your family and what it means.

5. Prewriting/Listing/Writing. Make a list of all the things or values that are important to Paw Paw (owl charm, politeness, roots, etc.). Then make a list of all those things that are important to Barney (being generous with his friends, being rich, etc.). Place stars before the values that Barney and Paw Paw have in common. Place a triangle before those they have in conflict.

Ask: Select the values that you agree are important from the two lists above. Write briefly why those values are important to you.

Encourage the class to make similar lists for themselves and their parents.

6. Writing/Newspaper. Write five newspaper headlines from the events that occur in the book. (Examples: How Barney landed in the hospital, Paw Paw's robbery, opening of the exhibit at the museum, etc.). Then write a newspaper account of one of the headlines.

7. Prewriting/Writing/Journal. Casey said "it was like there had always been this person inside of me that I had never been able to name or describe--a small, feathery me lost inside this body." Ask: Have you ever felt that kind of aloneness? In your journal write about the time you felt most alone. Why couldn't you reach out to others? Describe the whole experience. This can be personal writing and does not need to be polished or shared.

Zolotow, Charlotte. Say It! Ill. Stevenson. Greenwillow, 1980.

A little girl and her mother take a walk on a windy, golden day. As they walk along together, the little girl keeps repeating "Say it, Say it, Say it!" And her mother does say it in many ways as together they drink in the glory of a bright, colorful fall. Finally, the mother says the words the little girl has been waiting for: "I love you!"

Zolotow captures the closeness between the little girl and her mother. Stevenson's watercolor illustrations enhance the words as he creates an autumn day around them. Together the author and artist create a scene of love and warmth.

Nothing can substitute for the pure pleasure of hearing or reading a book on your own. The book creates an atmosphere that can place the reader as a third person looking in or joining the scene. Zolotow writes:

The wind quietened down and the trees in the water were still. But as they watched, the wind began again and the trees in the pond shuddered into a million zigzagging streaks of color.

Stevenson's illustrations complement the words as his colors zigzag across the page.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting. This book abounds with descriptive phrases. The mother in the book responds, "It's a golden shining splendiferous day." A word like splendiferous is one that children love to roll around on their tongue and digest to make it their own. They can respond with their own description of common things like snow, wind, night.

Later, Zolotow tells "the wind blew the little girl's hair straight up, and her mother's as well, and made them both laugh." Sharing moments like this often is an experience that is real to young children, and can be described by them. If a class takes a walk during the various seasons, they can discuss their similar experiences.

As children read and become familiar with descriptive language in books, they can be encouraged to use it orally, and it often begins to show up in their own writing within the classroom.

2. Writing/Journal. After enjoying books like "Say It!" children can begin to describe their feelings and observations in a personal journal. Carol Chomsky has found that, "Children write about things they know in their environment and things in which they are truly interested." ("How Sister Got Into the Grog," Early Years, Nov. 1975.)

3. Extensions. Other books that may interest your class include:

SPRING: The Boy Who Didn't Believe in Spring by Lucille Clifton.

SUMMER: The White Marble by Charlotte Zolotow (reissued this year).

WINTER: The Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats.

An article by Joetta Beaver describing many ways of using this book appeared in a Spring 1982 issue of Language Arts.

Babbitt, Natalie. Tuck Everlasting. Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1975. (Bantam)

Tuck Everlasting is a gentle, enchanting story about a young girl who stumbles upon the secret of the Tuck family. She is kidnapped by the Tucks so they will have time to help her understand why their secret must not be shared.

The characters in this book become real to the reader and it is through knowing them that the reader understands the enormity of their secret--living forever. This book, although about living forever, helps the reader understand the natural cycle of life and death.

1. Prewriting/Writing. Engage the class in a discussion: Did you think Mr. Tuck was a wise person? What did he say that particularly struck you?

Have the children go back through the book and pick out the wise things that the Tuck family said. Create a booklet called "Tuck's Book of Worldly Wisdom."

2. Prewriting/Writing. Ask the students to choose five characters from the book and give three examples of what each character learned or did not learn.

Now encourage them to write a letter to one of these characters. Let him or her know how you feel about what they learned or didn't learn. Do you have anything to say to the man in the yellow suit about his plan to sell the water? Any words of sympathy or comfort to Mae Tuck about the murder? And so on.

3. Writing/Point of View. Write the toad's story from his point of view.

4. Prewriting/Writing. Begin a class discussion: What could have happened if the man in the yellow suit bottled and sold the water? What kind of people would buy it? If greedy people bought it, do you believe later that non-greedy types might buy it just to preserve the balance of good people in the world? What would the world become?

Then have them create a science fiction account of the world fifty years after people began drinking the water. Think about food and housing problems, waste disposal, social security benefits, people being able to get jobs . . . .

Or, imagine that today you've made the decision to buy a bottle of special water. You know that from the day you drink it your body will not age or change. What would you change about your body and appearance before you drink the water? Write about this.

5. Prewriting/Writing. Discuss the events that led to the murder. Do you believe that Mae Tuck has any other options?

After brainstorming, have individuals imagine they are the prosecuting attorney putting Mrs. Tuck on trial for murder. Prepare the case on paper, giving all the arguments and supporting them with facts from the book.

5. > Extensions. If your students liked this book they may enjoy: I Heard the Owl Call My Name by M. Craven, The Tenth Good Thing About Barney by Judith Viorst, Ring of Endless Light by Madeline L'Engle, Tiger Eyes by Judy Blume, The Pigman by Paul Zindel and A Girl Called Al by Constance Greene.

Bellairs, John. The House With a Clock In Its Walls. Ill. by Edward Gorey. Dial, 1973. (Dell)

John Bellairs's The House With a Clock In Its Walls is a story that contrasts good and evil with chilling scenes of the supernatural. The sudden death of his parents causes Lewis to live with his Uncle Jonathan, in a large stone mansion. Lewis discovers that his uncle and a neighbor, Mrs. Zimmerman, are skilled in the art of magic and are confronted with an evil sorcerer, Isaac Izard, who was the original owner of the house. Isaac Izard has hidden a doomsday clock somewhere in the walls of the mansion and during the night it could be heard ticking the minutes away until the end of the world. Lewis discovers how to perform magic himself through secretly reading his Uncle's books and on the eve of Halloween releases Selena Izard, Isaac's wife, from her tomb.

The story balances frightening situations with humorous scenes of the good magicians, Uncle Jonathan and Mrs. Zimmerman. The setting is based on John Bellairs' childhood memories of Marshall, Michigan, referred to as the town of New Zebedee.

1. Prewriting/Listing. Throughout the story there are descriptions of scenes that may be explained as the result of magic or the supernatural such as the jungle view through the mirror of the coat rack in the front hall of the mansion. Have students make a list of as many of these occurrences as they can find throughout the story.
2. Writing/Editing. Living in an old mansion like Uncle Jonathan's with a variety of rooms, secret passageways and supernatural occurrences could be full of adventure. Have students write their own description of an old home, including unusual occurrences that would be difficult to explain through natural causation. Have students edit these papers for a bulletin board.
3. Prewriting/Writing. At the end of the story Lewis stated, "I don't think Tarby and I were meant to be friends. We're not the same type. But it doesn't matter." Write three characteristics of Lewis and Tarby using notetaking skills to expand upon these character traits.

Suppose you were a friend of both Lewis and Tarby. You went to the same school and lived in the same neighborhood. Write a paragraph suggesting how you would attempt to foster friendship between these two boys. In your paragraph you might suggest activities or events that Lewis and Tarby could both share.

4. Prewriting/Writing/Editing. Review the use of the Reader's Guide and the card catalogue in the school or public library. Help students locate information related to poltergeists and occurrences that are difficult to attribute to natural causes. Through the process of notetaking, information related to these topics should be recorded.

Write a report, summarizing one or more of the articles researched.

If these reports are to be compiled into a class booklet, students should have classmates proofread their research papers for spelling, punctuation, grammar and word usage. Emphasis should be placed on legible handwriting as others will certainly want to read these fascinating accounts.

Students might investigate the "accuracy" of ghost and magic detailed in the novel.

5. Extensions. Those who enjoyed The House With A Clock In Its Walls might also enjoy: Other Books by John Bellairs: The Figure in the Shadows; The Letter, The Witch and The Ring;

Other Books about The Supernatural: An Enemy at Green Knowe by L. M. Bostom; The Ghost of Thomas Kempe by Penelope Lively; The Satanic Mill by Otto Preusler.



Burton, Virginia Lee. The Little House. Houghton, Mifflin, 1942.

A sturdy, well-built little house sits on a hill far out in the country, pleasantly surrounded by apple trees and flowing brooks. Although she is happy, she is curious about life in the city. As the years go by, her neighborhood changes. Roads are built through the countryside, and cars replace horses. Gasoline stations follow the roads, houses spring up about her, and eventually even apartment buildings and subways ring the spot where she stands. Her once peaceful rural environment becomes a bustling city, and the little house is sad because she can no longer even see the sun and the moon. Finally, she is rescued by a descendant of the man who built her. His great-great-granddaughter moves the little house to another hill, one far out in the country, where she can once again enjoy trees, brooks, and the seasons.

This book deals with urban encroachment in simple, concrete terms, making this sociological phenomenon intelligible for even quite young children. Although the little house is personified, she never appears ridiculous or sentimentalized. Vibrant watercolor paintings help tell this quiet story. They are somewhat stylized, and provide many panoramic views of the countryside and the city. Circles and curved lines create a swirling effect that underscores the passage of time and quite appropriately support the theme of change.

1. Prewriting/Writing. The artist's use of color should be appropriate to the story and contribute to mood, theme, and action. Examine how Burton uses color at different places in the book. Are the colors the same or different? What colors are used? With what effect? Have students use color in a sentence about how they feel about something.

2. Prewriting/Writing. An artist's use of line (the way the artist builds up forms) should also be functionally significant. Make a list of words to describe Burton's graphic style. Discuss how it is appropriate to the action and theme of social change. Burton designed sets for the stage before entering the field of book illustration. The panoramic views of the countryside and the city evoke the sense of the stage and contribute to the universality of the little house's story. The little house remains "center stage" throughout, and events revolve about her. A paragraph might be written about the artist's use of line and form.

3. Prewriting/Note Taking. As Burton's pictorial style is important to the development of the story of the little house, so also is her narrative style. Notice how at the beginning of the story, Burton's style of writing is relaxed, flowing, and poetic. The use of repetition makes it very rhythmical, and it is sharp and vivid with such images as "thin new moon." Later, the author's style grows staccato and agitated to convey the sense of the little house's less contented perplexed, and lonely frame of mind. Find and copy passages that particularly indicate how the little house feels, and show how they are appropriate to the plot.

4. Prewriting/Research/Interview/Writing. What happened to the little house is not unique. The urban encroachment that changed the little house's way of life and threatened to destroy her is not an unusual happening. Seldom, however, are "little houses" rescued and salvaged for another lease on life. Most of them are razed to make way for "progress." Sometimes, however, old houses that have some historical or sociological significance to a community are preserved so that later generations can see how their ancestors lived. Investigate to find out if there is such a house in your area, and take the class to visit it. Interview the curator or town historian to learn about the history of the house. Before the visit, have the class list what they feel are the most important questions to ask the curator. Tape the interview. After the field trip, play the tape to identify how the little house's history is different from and similar to that of the local dwelling. Class members might write a class book about the local house, each taking some aspect of the house about which to write.

5. Prewriting/Outlining/Writing. Write a sequel to the story of the little house in which the little house describes the family that lives in her after she returns to the country and one adventure that the family has together that takes place in the little house. Before writing, make a brief outline of the main episodes to be included in the narrative.

6. Extensions. The class might also enjoy Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel and Katie and the Big Snow (about a snow shovel). Both are by Virginia Lee Burton and about personified objects.

Other books in which objects are given life are Little Toot by Hardie Gramatky, The Little Engine That Could by Watty Piper, and The Little Red Lighthouse by Lynd Ward.

The Little House is a "landmark" book, one of the first good books of its kind. Here are other landmarks that the class might enjoy: Millions of Cats by Wanda Gag, The Story of Ferdinand by Munro Leaf, illustrated by Robert Lawson, and Make Way for Ducklings by Robert McCloskey.



Coover, Susan. Over Sea, Under Stone. Ill. Margery Gill. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1965. (Voyager)

When the three Drew children spend a summer vacation with their great uncle Merry in an old house in Cornwall, they become central figures in a modern search for the Grail. They become the targets of a plot by the forces of The Dark to subdue the world.

This first of Cooper's five books in the series is an easing into the heavily ominous situation found in The Dark is Rising and the following books. The children solve the mystery themselves with a minimum of help from adults, and the fruits of their search--an old manuscript and the golden cup--are satisfying rewards.

The story of the grail is part of Arthurian legends, and Over Sea, Under Stone introduces the background of the legends as well as Uncle Merry, who, it is suggested, is really Merlin. This book is probably the easiest of the five to understand and follow, although the series comprises a thrilling whole.

1. Prewriting/Research/Notetaking/Writing. Although Uncle Merry and Barney between them tell the reader a good deal of the Arthur story, there is much more to be learned. Students should consult library materials on such people as Bedwin (Bedivere, Bedwyr), Merlin, Mark, etc. The notes could be composed into short reference paragraphs and distributed to the rest of the class before the book is read.

2. Prewriting/Research/Notetaking/Writing. Although Cooper gives substantial description of the Cornish coast, her descriptions are directly related to the story she is telling. Students can find pictures of and guide books to Cornwall, paying particular attention to the area around Tintagel, to the place where legendary Lyonesse was supposed to be, and the coast near Truro. Students doing this research can create a bulletin board and write reference paragraphs or essays for the rest of the class describing in detail the geography of this part of Cornwall.

3. Extension/Prewriting/Research/Writing. The series of five fantasy novels that begins with Over Sea, Under Stone is based in Arthurian romance. Other heroes could also provide the basis of stories about 20th century children fighting evil. Students could read of Robin Hood, Sigurd, Odysseus or others and plan and write a story that includes both modern children and a legendary hero.

Before the children write such stories they should make a list of the characteristics of the hero they have chosen, so as they write they can incorporate these characteristics in the stories.

4. Extensions. Those who enjoyed Over Sea, Under Stone might also enjoy the following: Other Books by Susan Cooper: The Dark is Rising, Greenwitch, The Grey King, Silver on the Tree; Other Books about Quests and King Arthur: The Story of King Arthur and His Knights by Barbara Piccard; the Prydain series by Lloyd Alexander; the Elidor books by Alan Garner; Earthfasts by William Mayne.

Grahame, Kenneth. Wind in the Willows. Ill. Ernest H. Shepard.  
Scribners, 1908. (paperbound reprint)

When Mole leaves his spring cleaning for a spur-of-the-moment holiday, he becomes part of a close and happy group of animals who live along the River bank. He meets Rat, who becomes his mentor and closest friend; he meets Toad, wealthy, gregarious and irresponsible, who takes him on a caravan adventure; he meets Otter, whose child he helps rescue; he meets kindly, gruff Badger and many others. Running through much of the book is the story of Toad's escapades in and out of jail. Other chapters tell about small adventures along the river.

All children should have a chance to experience this classic of English prose. Some will not like it, but others will become lovers for life. This story of small animals in a rural English landscape contains, among other things, an adventure modeled on the Odyssey, poetry, mythology, slapstick comedy and domestic pathos, as well as close and loving observations of nature.

Grahame's style is rich and leisurely. He isn't afraid to stop and describe all the flowers along a stretch of river bank or each minute detail of a sunrise. Most elementary children would probably enjoy this most read aloud. It isn't necessary to understand that the characters are mild satires on English rural gentry types: Each character is a recognizable individual in his own right. (All of the main characters are male. Females appear only as maids, washerwomen, barge women, and a jailer's daughter.)

1. Prewriting/Listing/Writing/Modeling. Wind in the Willows is firmly based in nature. The environment is profoundly a part of the animals' lives and Grahame shows us the birds, flowers, weeds, animals and trees that are part of the River bank life. A few paragraphs into the chapter "The Wild Wood" Grahame gives a catalog of wild flowers in the order in which they bloom on the River bank. With a wildflower guide for your area, have the children make a list of weeds and wildflowers that appear month by month throughout the year. The list should include accurate descriptive notes on color, shape, smell, size and habitat.

From this list, have the children write descriptions of a field, river bank, hillside, shore where might be found the flowers on the list, blooming one after another.

Imitate Grahame's style. Grahame was much admired for his elegant prose style, but it is a style that is no longer fashionable in children's books, perhaps. One of its chief merits is that it requires precise and accurate observation of detail. If a writer imitates his style, the exercise may be enlightening about the amount of detail that can be included in a story, and even if much of it is edited out later, the sense

of the writer's intimate familiarity with his/her subject will remain to enrich the final product.

Grahame uses a Pageant as the governing image in his paragraph, personifying each flower as a human member of the pageant. The children could use this image, or they might use a ballet, a parade or a film, perhaps. Close study of Grahame's paragraph will show his use of alliteration, action verbs, adjectives, etc.

The product of this activity may be only a paragraph the writer wants to put in a journal rather than revise and circulate.

2. Prewriting/Drama/Writing/Editing. A. A. Milne has put Toad's adventures into play form. The children could present this play or a part of it. They could make notes on Milne's text and compare it with Grahame's original novel for changes, simplifications, additional dialogue, and methods of characterization other than description.

Have students create their own play. Mole's adventures in the Wild-wood, or the "Dulce Domum" chapter would make exciting plays for presentation to a lower grade, to parents or to another room of the same grade. In writing such a play, the authors will have to consider the nature of the audience. They may need to "preview" their production in Hollywood fashion, presenting the play, then discussing the production with the audience and revising the play in accordance with audience comments.

If the play is produced, as it could be, by a committee, the group will need to decide a number of things in advance: Length of the play, number of characters, number of scene changes, kinds of props, costumes, and make up. When these decisions are made, each author, or perhaps pair of authors, could write one scene. The teacher might consider providing a tape recorder to help in composition; the writers could then hear their dialogue immediately as the spoken word.

Thus, editing and revision should be a continuing process, growing naturally out of a paired authorship and/or tape recorded dialogue.

3. Prewriting/Notetaking/Research. Although the animals in Wind in the Willows are human, they are also still very much animal and use animal senses and instincts in their daily lives. As you read the story, or listen to it, encourage students to make note of how the animals use their senses, particularly the ways that differ from those of humans.

The next step is to have the children find library material about animal senses and make complete written notes on their findings. The things they find out about animal senses can be reported to the class or can be part of a discussion of the book.

4. Extensions. Those who enjoyed Wind in the Willows might also enjoy other Animal Fantasies: Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling; Animal Family by Randall Jarrell; Rabbit Hill by Robert Lawson.

Lionni, Leo. Swimmy. Pantheon, 1963. (paperback)

When Swimmy's brothers and sisters are swallowed by a large hungry tuna fish, Swimmy begins a lonely journey encountering marvels and dangers in the sea. Finally, he meets another school of small fish and together they outwit their common enemies.

Leo Lionni is a modern fabulist. Each of his picture books is written for a didactic purpose. In this story the major motif is parallel to the Grimm's "Bremen Town Musicians"; success in outwitting the larger, more powerful, creatures comes through teamwork. The illustrations, combining water color and sponge painting, complement the feeling of the text. They create the setting in an emotional context. When Swimmy is safe or happy, the colors are light and the background is "airy"; when Swimmy is "scared, lonely and very sad," the colors are grey-green and muted. The seeming simplicity and child-like quality of the illustrations make them especially appealing to young children.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Movement. After reading the book, have children stand at their desks or in a circle and pantomime using Lionni's sparse, rich, language to suggest movement. For example: the "lobster, who walked about like a water-moving machine," and "strange fish, pulled by an invisible thread."
2. Prewriting/Research. Have the children do research on other creatures of the sea, draw imaginative pictures of them and write a caption for each suggesting further adventures for Swimmy before he reaches his new friends.
3. Writing. Create another story of Swimmy and his new family. What other dangers might they encounter? How can they use teamwork to overcome another crisis?
4. Prewriting/Science/Research/Notetaking/Dialogue. Lionni's picture book includes very little dialogue. Have the children invent dialogue between Swimmy and some of the creatures he meets along the way. For example, have the children investigate the lobster and the eel in an encyclopedia or their science book to gain enough knowledge about the nature and habitat of the creature so that the conversation informs Swimmy about more of his environment.
5. Prewriting/Media/Writing. Leo Lionni is also a filmmaker. He has translated his picture book, Swimmy, into a short animated film. After reading and discussing the book, show the film version and encourage the class to discuss the similarities and differences. How does Lionni add humor? Why do you think he lets you "see" Swimmy thinking in the film but not in the book? Write a short paragraph explaining one main difference between the film and the book.
6. Extensions. Those who enjoyed this book may also enjoy other books by Leo Lionni such as Fish Is Fish, Tico and the Golden Wings, Inch By Inch, Little Blue and Little Yellow, Fredrick. Note: Lionni also did film versions of Little Blue . . . and Fredrick.

Norton, Mary. The Borrowers. Ill. Beth and Joe Krush. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1952. (Voyager)

Arrietty, the 13-year-old daughter of a family of tiny people living secretly beneath the floor boards of an English manor house, makes friends with an ordinary-sized boy. As a result, the family is discovered and hounded from their home by the wicked housekeeper.

Enchanting details of tininess enrich this story of an adventurous heroine who is training to follow in her father's footsteps as the breadwinner--borrower--for her family. The book's themes, interdependence of all life and tolerance for human differences, go far beyond the gentle Victorian setting. Early elementary children, too young to read this themselves, enjoy having the book read aloud. One caution for those using The Borrowers with younger children: The book is a frame story and the chronology is difficult to follow in the first part.

1. Prewriting/Notetaking/Observation. The miniature world in which the Clocks live is one of the chief attractions of this book. The appeal is two-fold: first, to the older child's half memories of his/her own smallness, and, second, to any person's desire to control and cherish simultaneously. Children who have forgotten that they could once walk upright under the dining room table can be reminded of this perspective of the world.

As part of the close observation of the world that must underlie an interesting story, ask the children to put themselves in the same physical plane as a Borrower for a while. At home or at school, they should lie prone on the floor, or sit under tables, or crawl from room to room, they should make careful written notes on the world from that point of view. What is there to be seen, first of all? Then, what advantages and dangers are there in electric outlets, for instance? cold air registers? shag rugs? a pile of newspapers? (The Voyager edition, pp. 60-79, contains examples of a Borrower's world view.)

2. Writing/Editing. The ending of the book is vague, intentionally so. We have only the unverified word of Mrs. May's brother that the Borrowers escaped, and he may have been teasing his older sister. Mrs. May can only guess what happened to the Clocks after they escaped through the broken grating. She suggests and hints at several satisfactory developments. In reality, Mary Norton wrote three more Borrowers tales, but the child who has just finished the book and wants to "really know" is the perfect person to write the further adventures of the Borrowers.

Several scenes suggest themselves: In the "flicker of movement" the boy sees behind the grating, a child could find the inspiration for writing the scene inside as the Clock family tries to escape. What

dialogue suggests itself for this tense moment? The reader knows Pod, Homily and Arrietty well by this time. What character traits are prominent in each at this moment? How does each act, what does each say?

As Mrs. May finishes her tale, she conjectures that if they did escape, perhaps Arrietty went exploring in the wild out-of-doors she had never known before. Children could write about some of the adventures Arrietty could have had, keeping in mind always the important size relationships. How big would a leaf be to Arrietty? What would pine needles be like? What would be a tree for a person as tiny as Arrietty?

If the Borrowers' sequels are to be edited and perhaps rewritten or polished, the student editor who reads a draft to be revised should pay attention to the details of size relationships in the stories, just as Norton had done in the book itself. As she wrote, Norton herself kept on her desk a collection of the kinds of things the Borrowers used for their furnishings, tools, etc.: spools, pencils, a hat pin, an acorn, nail scissors. The editor of the outdoor adventure should probably keep handy a collection of leaves, pebbles, nuts, pine needles, twigs and bird feathers to keep a running check on the stability of the size relationships.

3. Extensions. Those who enjoyed The Borrowers might also enjoy: Other Books by Mary Norton: The Borrowers Afield, The Borrowers Afloat, The Borrowers Aloft;

Other Books about Little People: The Return of the Twelves by Pauline Clarke; The Gammage Cup by Carol Kendall; Gulliver's Travels by Jonathan Swift; Mistress Masham's Repose by T. H. White.



O'Brien, Robert. Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH. Ill. Zena Bernstein  
Atheneum, 1971. (Aladdin)

When Mrs. Frisby, a mouse, must move her family, the only satisfactory help she can find comes from the mysterious Rats who have transformed their hole under a rose bush into a modern factory and dwelling complex. They give their help willingly and in the process reveal their own incredible history as the products of modern genetic research. They rescue Mrs. Frisby and her family, but lose their own home and set off to put into effect their plan to become completely independent of mankind.

The scientific background for transformation of the rats into readers, writers and inventors is based on actual experiments and is convincingly detailed in this book. The story of their transformation is told in a lengthy flashback, which is skillfully worked into the narrative and should present no problems. Some of the incidents are a little too fortuitous to be believable: the finding of the tinker's truck, for instance, but much can be forgiven a book of such high adventure, excitement and humor.

1. Prewriting/Notetaking/Writing. The book seems almost to have been written as the first in a series! The untied threads of plot seem to lead inexorably to another book. Of course, O'Brien is dead, but the children can write their own sequel(s).

Ask the children to make a list of the unanswered questions in the story that could be answered in a sequel. The obvious first one is how well did the rats make out as independent creatures? But the list is a fairly long one and will grow naturally out of a careful reading of the book.

2. Prewriting/Technique/Point of View. As background for this activity, have children read books from a series that has a sequel or two. They might, for example, read The Borrowers and The Borrowers Afield, or The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe and then Prince Caspian. The object of this activity is to observe the ways in which the writer ties the sequel back to the first book from which it sprang. Two of the principal ways in which the writer does this are to give a narrative paragraph or two of explanation near the beginning and to include references to the earlier book in the conversation of the characters.

For writing a sequel to Mrs. Frisby, the writers should make a list of events in the first book that they will need to refer to and explain in the sequel.

In writing sequels to Mrs. Frisby, the writers should be conscious of point of view. Each writer should decide through which character he/she is going to tell the story. What Timothy sees and does after the end of



Mrs. Frisby will be different from what the Rats see and do, for instance. It will also affect the tie backs to the first book: The characters will not remember or have experienced the same things.

4. Media. The recent film The Secret of NIMH is loosely based on this novel. Have children select a character or theme they found important and satisfactory in the novel and compare it to the film version.

5. Extensions. Those who have enjoyed Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH might also enjoy other animal fantasies such as Stuart Little by E. B. White; Abel's Island by William Steig; Cricket in Times Square by George Selden; The Rescuers by Margery Sharp. Or they might enjoy A Stranger at Green Knowe by L. M. Boston, a fine animal tale, but not a fantasy.

Pearce, Philippa. Tom's Midnight Garden. Ill. by Susan Einzig. Harper & Row, 1958. (Dell)

Tom is forced to spend part of a summer with his aunt and uncle because his brother contracts the measles. He anticipates a boring visit until he discovers a garden that appears each midnight when a grandfather clock in the hall strikes thirteen. In this mysterious garden he befriends Kathy who was sometimes young and sometimes older. Tom's adventures become so involved that he decides not to return to his family.

The story is one of intrigue with time being the key element as the plot unfolds. Students are given the opportunity to experience the concept of time change by reliving events in the past and returning to the present.

1. Prewriting/Interview/Writing. Have students pretend that they're newspaper editors in the city where the Kitsons' lived during the time that Tom had his adventures in the garden. Have them prepare a series of questions that would allow them to interview Tom. These questions should then be given to students who would develop answers based on the information from Tom's Midnight Garden.

Demonstrate for students how to plan and construct an interview by actually interviewing a student or an adult in the classroom. Next give examples of good questioning techniques by sharing and discussing interviews from magazines.

If your neighborhood is at least sixty years old interview two or three people who are over sixty and have lived in the area for most of their lives. The questionnaire should contain items that would give information on what life was like during this time such as kind of dress, appearance of buildings or lack of them and location of farm property. How does an author use this kind of information to give authenticity to a story? Encourage the students to write an historical character sketch or description.

2. Prewriting/Time Line/Editing. Demonstrate how a time line is developed by using a personality that is familiar to the students. Next have the students work with you in the construction of a second time line focusing on the events of their own life.

Review Tom's Midnight Garden by making a list of the different occasions that Tom re-entered the garden. Take notes indicating one or two key events during each visit and list any change in the ages of the characters. Finally, develop a time line based on this information. The time line should be transferred to tag board or construction paper and displayed in the classroom.

Have one or more students who read the book check the accuracy of the time line before it is displayed.

3. Extension. Those who enjoyed Tom's Midnight Garden might also enjoy: other books by Philippa Pearce: A Dog So Small, Minnow on the Say. Other time travel: Fog Magic by Julia Sauer, A Traveler in Time by Allison Utley, The Children of Green Knowe by L. M. Boston, Court of the Stone Children by E. Cameron.

Sendak, Maurice. Where the Wild Things Are. Harper and Row, 1963.  
(Paperback)

When Max misbehaves and makes mischief "of one kind and another," his mother calls him a "wild thing" and sends him to bed without his supper. In his room by himself, Max works out his hostilities by imagining that he sails away to a far place where he meets and conquers humorously grotesque monsters. After he sends them to bed without their supper, he decides to give up being king of the wild things and sails back home to his own room where he finds a hot supper waiting for him.

This Caldecott winner is considered a modern classic. It combines poetically expressive text, innovative fantasy, and imaginative, strongly composed line and tempera illustrations in moody, chalky, somber blues and purples to present with rare insight and sensitivity domestic tension between a child and his mother from the child's point of view. The book makes important use of symbolism. The hot supper at the end is an especially fine example. It represents the mother's continuing love in spite of Max's rebellious behavior, a perfect way to conclude the book with its rich connotations of affectionate reconciliation and acceptance.

Warning: The rich beauty of the language and pictures of this exquisite book can be missed if activities are overemphasized. The following suggestions should be used very sparingly.

1. Prewriting/Discussion. Notice how the pictures grow larger as Max becomes more and more engrossed in his fantasy world. During the "wild rumpus," the pictures carry the story, and there is no text at all. After the rumpus is over, the pictures gradually diminish in size. Why does Sendak do this? Why is it appropriate to the story and its theme?
2. Prewriting/Discussion. Think about the artist's use of color. Why might he have chosen to use chalky, muted, low-key tones rather than vivid, brilliant colors throughout the book? Speculate upon how the effect would be different if he had used brighter colors.
3. Prewriting/Listing. The text is extremely poetic. Have the students find and list phrases that make it so--that are, for example, rhythmical or rich in imagery.
4. Prewriting/Definition. This book is considered a modern classic. Explain the concept of a classic. A classic endures because it comments on the human condition in such a way that it helps readers and listeners better to understand themselves and the world around them. It has the qualities of timelessness and universality. Have students discuss whether or not Wild Things is worthy of being accorded classic status in terms of their own personal experience. What other books might they title "classic"? Make a class list.

5. Writing/Editing. Discuss what should be included if you were to compose a book jacket for this book. List the points to be included in the "blurb" upon the board or on experience charts.

Make a book jacket. Draw the picture for the cover. Write the inside "blurb," and write biographical information on the author for the inside of the back flap.

For the back flap material, a reference like SOMETHING ABOUT THE AUTHOR will provide information about Sendak.

6. Extensions. Readers and listeners who have enjoyed this book might enjoy reading two books subsequently published by Sendak, which together with Wild Things make up what is being called Sendak's "trilogy on childhood." The other two books are In the Night Kitchen and Outside Over There.

Sendak is a very versatile artist. Notice how he varies his technique in A Hole Is To Dig by Ruth Krauss, The House of Sixty Fathers by Meindert De Jong, The Moon Jumpers by Janice Udry, Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present by Charlotte Zolotow, the four books of his own Nutshell Library, and of the trilogy.

Two other books which have very poetic texts are Time of Wonder by Robert McCloskey and Once a Mouse by Marcia Brown.

Three other picture books which have elements of the imagination come alive are One Monday Morning by Uri Shulevitz and Sam, Bangs and Moonshine by Evaline Ness, And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street by Dr. Seuss.

Seuss, Dr. (Theodor Geisel). The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins.  
Vanguard, 1938.

Bartholomew is a simple, unassuming youth who lives in the ancient Kingdom of Didd. When his king passes by in procession, Bartholomew respectfully removes his hat, only to discover to his surprise and disappointment that another has magically replaced it. Shocked and angered, the king has Bartholomew arrested but more hats keep appearing, and neither Bartholomew's best efforts nor those of anyone else can make them stop. Finally, the Grand Duke Wilfred suggests that Bartholomew be executed for such flagrant disrespect for convention and authority. As Bartholomew marches up the turret stairs, his hats change in appearance becoming larger and more ornate. The 500th is so remarkably resplendent that the king buys it for 500 pieces of gold, thus ending Bartholomew's misadventures.

This modern classic improvises inventively on the traditional folk tale pattern of the poor boy who makes good. Mostly plot, the story moves along at a good pace, with generous patches of dialogue, combines irony, humor, and light suspense, and achieves a gripping climax and thoroughly satisfactory conclusion. Older children and youth can appreciate the book as a gentle spoof, an approach which the two-color cartoon illustrations appropriately support.

1. Prewriting/Listing/Writing. Make a list of the characters that the king calls upon to help Bartholomew remove his hat. After each name jot down in a few words what the character is like as he is presented in the story itself. What more can be learned about the character from the pictures? List these qualities also.

Choose the most likeable character, and using the list write a character sketch of that figure. In the same way, write about the most amusing character or the most despicable character.

2. Prewriting/Irony/Writing. Much of the humor of the book arises from the use of irony. What is ironic about the scene in which Bartholomew first tries to take off his hat? What is ironic about the scene with the executioner? Discover other examples of irony. List them and discuss why they are ironic and how the irony adds to the humor. Notice that the whole story involves a basic irony--that Bartholomew's best efforts go so awry. Have students discuss this in terms of their own experience. Choose one example of irony from the story, and write about it. Choose one example from real life, and write about it.

3. Prewriting/Point of View/Writing. Although Bartholomew does not tell the story, it is written from his point of view; he is the character with whom we are most sympathetic and with whom the reader identifies. Discuss how the story would be different if it were written in first person, with Bartholomew telling the story. Rewrite a) the beginning of the story in Bartholomew's own words; b) the scene in which he first tries to take off

his hat; c) any other scene that you feel would lend itself especially well to Bartholomew's telling it.

Try telling part of the story from the standpoint of the king, of Grand Duke Wilfred, or of the executioner. Experiment and compare results with the original.

4. Extensions. Other books by Dr. Seuss that the students might enjoy include Bartholomew and the Oobleck, To Think That I Saw It On Mulberry Street, and Horton Hatches The Egg.

The illustrations in 500 Hats are cartoonish in style. Other books done in cartoon style include H. A. Rey's books about Curious George, the mischievous monkey, Eve Titus' books about Anatole, the resourceful mouse, Little Toot by Hardie Gramatky; Harry the Dirty Dog by Gene Zion; and Sylvester and the Magic Pebble by William Steig.

Steig, William. Sylvester and the Magic Pebble. Simon and Schuster, 1969.  
(paperback)

Sylvester Duncan, a donkey child, likes to collect pebbles. One Saturday he finds a magic pebble that has the power to grant wishes. On his way home to share his new found treasure with his family, he meets a hungry-looking lion on Strawberry Hill. Afraid he will be eaten, he inadvertently turns himself into a rock. As the year passes, his father and mother search diligently and unsuccessfully for their lost son. The next spring they pack a picnic lunch and go to Strawberry Hill where the family had spent many happy hours. Ironically, Father Duncan finds the magic pebble, remarks on how much his son would have enjoyed it for his collection, and places it on the very rock that is now Sylvester, making it possible for Sylvester to wish himself back into his proper form. The family is joyfully reunited and returns home, grateful to be who they are and satisfied with what they have--one another.

The full-color cartoon paintings excel in storytelling quality and contribute significant details of character, action, and setting. They sparkle with humor and effectively bridge fantasy and realism. The story is strong and filled with emotional appeal and would connect with a child of any age. Vocabulary is mature, but even younger students can get the meaning quite easily from the context.

1. Prewriting/Note Taking. Although the book can be quite descriptive of action, emotions, and setting, occasionally the author effectively uses understatement. For example, consider this sentence found when Father Duncan is sitting morosely alone: "Life held no meaning for them any more." Encourage your children to discuss the implications of this sentence. What do you know about the family from hearing the story and from looking carefully at the pictures? How does this knowledge help you interpret and elaborate on this simple statement? Take notes on the story and on what you see in the pictures so that you can discuss the implications.

Consider the two sentences on the page with the policemen reporting to the Duncans on their futile efforts to locate their son. Ask students to find other sentences that might be expanded with discussion.

Or ask students to find and jot down phrases that show how effective the author's use of language is. For example, "Being helpless, he felt hopeless." Why is this an effective turn of phrase?

2. Prewriting/Discussion. Do a close reading of some of the individual pictures in the book to explore how they reveal thoughts and feelings. Examine, for example, the picture with Mr. and Mrs. Duncan tearfully awaiting Sylvester's return. Or the ending picture with the family cheerfully reunited. Have students compare the emotions, body language, and so forth.

3. Prewriting/Writing/Editing. Divide the class into groups to plan writing the first page of the Duncans' hometown newspaper: (a) after Sylvester's disappearance, and (b) after his return. Discuss appropriate headlines. Discuss what might be included in a story offering a reward for information leading to the discovery of his whereabouts. Have them look back through the illustrations for possible people to interview for stories. Draw up a chart indicating who will serve as reporters and whom they will interview. Reporters and interviewees can plan questions to ask and possible responses. Role play for natural dialogue.

Have your students write the stories and edit them for "publication." Put them on dittos for distribution to the class, the rest of the school, and parents. Join with other teachers to have several classes do newspaper items related to the literature they are reading. Then have one of the classrooms serve as the newspaper office and produce the paper.

4. Extensions. Those who enjoyed this book might also enjoy some others by William Steig such as The Amazing Bone, Abel's Island, Dominic, Roland and the Minstrel Pig, and Amos and Boris;

Other books with large animals that talk such as Robert Lawson's Mr. Revere and I, or Rudyard Kipling's Just So Stories ("How the Camel Got His Hump," "The Elephant's Child");

Other picture book stories of family life with talking animals such as the books about Frances, a charming badger, by Russell Hoban and the easy-readers about Little Bear by Else Holmelund Minarik, illustrated by Maurice Sendak;

Other books using cartoon illustrations about talking animals such as Roger Duvoisin's Petunia and The Happy Lion and Jean De Brunhoff's Babar.



Van Allsburg, Chris. Jumanji. Houghton Mifflin, 1981.

In the park near their house, two bored and restless children find what appears to be an ordinary looking jungle board game called Jumanji. As they play the game in their living room, creatures from the game board come to life in the house, among them, a lion, some monkeys, a man on safari, and a python. When the children encounter the monsoon season on the board, rain begins to fall in the house, and the game volcano erupts with a mass of molten lava pouring from the fireplace. Once the children reach the city of golden towers and buildings at the end of the jungle path and shout out its name, "Jumanji," the creatures disappear back into the board and things get back to rights in the house, but while the game is in progress the children have many scary moments. Once the game is over, the children return it to its place in the park as soon as they can. A little while later they notice that it has been picked up by two other bored and restless children.

This potentially circular story offers much excitement and suspense and many surprises. Although the author's style is pedestrian, the plot is inventive in concept, and the inconclusive ending opens interesting possibilities for imaginative projections. The large, full-page, illustrations, done in tones of black and gray, skillfully combine reality and fantasy. Their mystical quality enhances the mystery and excitement of the story. Objects in the illustrations are "up front," near the viewer's plane, a technique which pulls the viewer in and greatly intensifies the viewing and listening experience. Michigan is Van Allsburg's native state, and this book, his second for young readers, won the Caldecott award for illustration in 1982.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Writing. Judy and Peter get into trouble because (a) they fail to heed instructions and (b) they make a wrong decision. Have the class discuss and list times when they got into trouble by not obeying directions or making bad choices. Let students compare the results of their actions with those of the children in the story. Things come out all right for Judy and Peter. Did matters turn out all right for the students? The children might write paragraphs or short essays on either topic. Before they begin writing, they should make an informal outline of the main episodes, or points, that they wish to make.
2. Prewriting/Diary Writing. Let the children pretend to be either Judy or Peter and keep a diary. As either Judy or Peter, each child should record in his or her diary that adventure during the Jumanji game that was the most scary.

Before students write, list the adventures that Judy and Peter have on the board in chronological order. Is there a pattern to them? Do they

become progressively more scary and exciting? Students can share their reactions. When they make their diary entries, they should both describe the adventure and record their feelings about it.

3. Prewriting/Writing. Have the class make up together another simple board game in which the players either find themselves in the world of the game on the board itself or in which the creatures and objects of the game enter the world of the players. As a class they can write a story like Jumanji about their combined experiences. Before they write, they must make certain decisions, for example: how will they enter the fantasy world? how will they leave it? how will they arrange the adventures for maximum effect? will the story be in third person, like Jumanji, or in first person?

4. Prewriting/Writing. Judy and Peter do not follow orders and make a bad decision, and they must take the consequences. They notice that Danny and Walter Budwing have picked up the box with the game in it. Should they warn the two boys about the game? Discuss what might happen if they do; if they don't. To what extent are people responsible for their friends' well-being?

Suppose Danny and Walter refuse to take advice about not playing the game. What might be some other jungle adventures that might result? A book about the jungle might give students ideas for further adventures. Individuals or the class as a group might expand one or more of these into a story or stories.

5. Prewriting/Listing/Organizing/Writing. Examine the illustrations carefully. Do they picture what is going on in the text? Do they add details? Do they help to create setting? character? mood? What do they seem to do best? Find an illustration that seems particularly effective at one, or more, of these.

Make a list of things that this illustration does for the accompanying text. Arrange them in order of importance, putting the most important one or ones last. Then write a paragraph telling why that picture is so good, incorporating the points as reasons and remembering to end the paragraph with the most important reasons for maximum effect.

6. Prewriting/Writing/Editing. Jumanji is by a Michigan author-artist. It received the Caldecott Medal, the most prestigious U. S. award for illustration. After discussing the illustrations and the importance of the award, students might write a news release announcing that the award has gone to a native son, describing the story and illustrations, for distribution throughout the school.

7. Extensions. If the students enjoyed Jumanji, they might also like: The Garden of Abdul Gasazi, Van Allsburg's first book for young readers and viewers, which was a Caldecott honor book, or Ben's Dream;

Other books in which games come to life such as The Cat in the Hat and To Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street, both by Dr. Seuss, One Monday Morning by Uri Shulevitz, Nothing Ever Happens on My Block by Ellen Raskin, The Shrinking of Treehorn by Florence Parry Heide, The Big Joke Game by Scott Corbett, and for older or more mature readers, The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin.

White, E. B. *Charlotte's Web*. Ill. Garth Williams. - Harper and Row, 1953.  
(Dell)

Charlotte A. Cavatica displays shrewdness and loyalty by saving the life of her friend, Wilbur, through spinning the words "Some Pig" in her web. Charlotte continues to spin words referring to Wilbur as "terrific," "radiant," and "humble." Thus Wilbur's life is assured and he lives on having a constant supply of friends in Charlotte's children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

1. Prewriting/Writing/Editing. Wilbur was just an ordinary pig until Charlotte spun the words "Some Pig" in her web. Reread Chapter XI "The Miracle" to the class. Discuss what immediately occurred on the Zukerman farm after these words were discovered by Lurvy.

What do you think would have occurred if Charlotte had written the words "Disgusting Pig" instead of "Some Pig" in her web? Would Mr. Zukerman have felt that Wilbur was something special? Would the town's people have come to visit Wilbur? Rewrite Chapter XI telling of the events that you feel could have occurred if Charlotte spun the words "Disgusting Pig." Remember to give a title to this chapter.

If the papers were displayed students should have other classmates proofread their papers for spelling, punctuation, grammar and word usage.

2. Prewriting/Listing/Note Taking. Have students write on a scratch pad ideas and suggestions they feel describe the meaning of true friendship and loyalty. Write their suggestions on the board and have them vote on the five that they feel are most essential to fit their definition of friendship.

Through memory or by having students reread the story, ask students to take notes listing examples of friendship and loyalty that Charlotte displayed towards Wilbur. Next have students compare these qualities with the class's own definition of friendship.

3. Prewriting/Note Taking/Research. The author has obviously done research in locating information about the physical characteristics and living habits of the gray spider found in a barnyard. After Charlotte's Web is completed have students list all the facts they remember about spiders in general without consulting White's book.

Then allow them to skim Charlotte's Web listing as many facts as they can find about spiders. Have students compare this list with their previous one.

Ask interested students to go to the library and "check" E. B. White's "facts" about spiders. What other kinds of spider families are there?

Students can report back to the class on their findings.

4. Prewriting/Dialogue. Make believe you have a sister who enjoyed talking to her dolls while playing each day. She told stories of them becoming sick and having to stay in bed until they feel better. Suppose your mother becomes worried about her and decides to pay a visit to Dr. Dorian. Write a conversation between your mother and Dr. Dorian. This dialogue can then be read by two students in small groups or before the class.

Reread Chapter XIV, Dr. Dorian to the class. Discuss how Dr. Dorian responded to Mrs. Arable's concerns about Fern's visits to the Zukerman's barnyard. Did the Doctor say that it was harmful for Fern to visit there? What did Dr. Dorian say in his discussion concerning the words spun by Charlotte and what did he say about spiders in general?

5. Extensions. Those who enjoyed Charlotte's Web might also enjoy the following: Other Books by E. B. White: Stuart Little, The Trumpet of the Swan and The Bat Poet.

Other Talking Animals: Animal Family and The Bat Poet by Randall Jarrell; Rabbit Hill by Robert Lawson; The Mouse and the Motorcycle by Beverly Cleary; Abel's Island by William Steig.

Arbuthnot, May. Time for Poetry. Scott, Foresman, 1972.

This one of the classic anthologies of poetry for children and is found in many classrooms. It contains sections with poems on MANY subjects including people, animals, play, make-believe, seasons and the like.

### SEASONS

"Round the Calendar" and "Wind and Water" are sections with poems that revolve around the seasons and holidays. There are over one hundred offerings which include poets such as William Blake, Rachel Field, Harry Behn and Robert Louis Stevenson. Select several poems to read that are about a particular season. Try to include different poetic forms and poems which will elicit a variety of feelings and images. Allow ample time for children to reflect and to share thoughts and feelings. Be careful not to force response but instead to create a comfortable environment which will encourage sharing.

1. Prewriting/Listing/Vocabulary Development. Play the appropriate section of Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons" and ask the children to reflect on how the music makes them feel or how parts of the music remind them of the poems that they have been read, and to think about what they have seen, felt, heard or tasted which reminds them of the season being presented.

After the music has been played encourage the children to share the words they thought of during their reflection time. Write them on the board. Then invite them to select their favorite word associated with each of the senses and write it down.

2. Prewriting/Writing. Invite the children to become something they associate with a particular season (the wind, the rain). Let them act out how they feel. Then provide them with a part of a sentence which begins "I am . . ." and encourage them to complete the thought by inserting the thing they have chosen to "become" and by describing how they will act during the selected season. Example: I am the lake's summer wave creeping over your towel.

### THE BODY

1. Prewriting/Listening/Discussion. Read several poems about the body such as: Lear's "There Was a Young Lady Whose Chin"; Sandburg's "Phizzog"; Kuskin's "Me (Alexander Soames)." Encourage the children to spend time observing their own bodies.

Then ask them to describe their body parts: What they look like, how they work, how they feel, how they smell, how they are different from their classmates, how they are the same. For younger children, have them do art activities that explore their uniqueness: hand outlines; fingerprint animals; whole body contour drawings and the like.

2. Extensions. Have the children collect other poems that include information about the body. They might recopy them for bulletin boards. For example, David McCord's "Everytime I Climb a Tree" in One More Time.

Behn, Harry, trans. Cricket Songs: Japanese Haiku. Harcourt, Brace, 1964.

Well known for his contributions to children's poetry in The Little Hill and Windy Morning, Harry Behn translates traditional haiku from the Japanese masters of this three line, seventeen syllable form (5-7-5). Behn's own haiku, in the dedication, suggests the combination of the senses and thoughts fused in throughout the book:

A spark in the sun,  
this tiny flower has roots  
deep in the cool earth.

Traditional Japanese pictures add a cultural dimension rather than illustrating specific poems.

Mizumura, Kazue. Flower Moon Snow: A Book of Haiku. Crowell, 1977.

This contemporary collection of thirty haiku written and illustrated by Kazue Mizumura crystalizes a child's delight and praise of the seasons: Forsythia are seen as a flash of lightning sparks; dandelions are tossed like golden coins across the lawn; the moon follows a person home like a constant companion. No poem in the book lies beyond a child's comprehension, yet each extends the child's experience as reflective thoughts normally do. The poems in Mizumura's book, moreover, have been given freedom to expand beyond the confines of seventeen syllables.

Something old, something new, these two pocket size collections of engaging poetry offer something for everyone. Mizumura's book includes a lucid, helpful introduction for child and adult alike.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Details. Because haiku presents a particular yet universal way of seeing, feeling and thinking, it might be a good idea not to have your students tackle the haiku form right away in their writing.

Use a book like Byrd Baylor's Guess Who My Favorite Person Is to suggest being specific and expanding ideas and images. This picture book is from a first person adult point of view. The characters are engaged in a game of guess-what-my-favorite \_\_\_\_\_ is. But the rules are specific. You can't just say "My favorite color is blue." You must be more specific: "the blue/on a lizard's belly/That sudden kind of blue/you see just for a second/sometimes--/so blue/that afterwards/you always think/you made it up." Give your class the opportunity to write equally detailed sensory impressions full of mood and thought..

Explore questions like: Where and when is your favorite place and time to walk alone? What is your favorite sound to hear first thing in the morning?

This kind of exercise can lead to more formal writing or to poetry, but it need not.

2. Prewriting/Describing/Writing/Free Writing/Verse. Introduce your students to the three basic elements of describing: giving detail, giving personal impression or feeling, or comparing. Have them sit in a busy place with paper and pen and record their observations. Work as a class to add detail, impression, or to compare an object to things that they know. When they have expanded their images with a richness of detail, have them abstract from them elements which lead to haiku, another way of seeing.

3. Haiku. Use some exercises like the ones above as a warm-up. Then have the students write haiku--flexibly, not with stringent guidelines for counting syllables. Help them to come to know haiku as a way of seeing, perceiving, thinking, communicating.

4. Freewriting. Encourage the kids to keep a haiku journal or deskbook. Encourage them to write whenever they have a few minutes free during the school day: Feelings at three o'clock, Friday afternoon thoughts, Monday morning announcements, and so forth.

5. Extension. For a change of pace you might have students look at Ezra Jack Keats' illustrations for In A Spring Garden, compiled and edited by Richard Lewis. How do the atmosphere and texture of the illustrations complement the lines in the haiku poetry? Encourage them to see that words too have color, texture, shape, composition and movement.



Benet, Rosemary (Carr) and Stephen Vincent. A Book of Americans. Ill.  
Charles Child. Rinehart, 1933.

The Benets' book about famous Americans from Christopher Columbus to Woodrow Wilson has blended poetry with Americana. Fifty-six metered, rhyming poems stimulate kids to know and think about presidents, explorers, settlers, pioneers, Native Americans, soldiers and heroes, inventors and discoverers, outlaws and entrepreneurs--individuals and groups with mettle who forged our history and left their imprint on our culture. This volume is more than poetry, more than history. It is poetry, history, biography, dramatic monologues and dialogues of people who have helped shape a nation, people who do not get lost in their deeds, living, breathing, caring people.

Perhaps not the best springboard for having children write poetry, this collection offers many other creative, interesting writing possibilities such as, responses to the speakers in the poems, letters to relatives of famous people, character sketches based on research, biographies written to classmates focusing on specific details of a famous person's life, inventive epitaphs, inventive interviews.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Writing/Dialogue. "Nancy Hanks" comes back from the grave to ask the reader a series of questions about her son, Abe Lincoln, and what his life was like. Have each child respond to Nancy Hanks in writing. Role play Nancy Hanks yourself and have the children read you their responses--probe for more information about "your boy." Have them write more. Let them discover the pleasures of dialogue and audience; let them discover the importance of detail and explanation. You as Nancy Hanks really want to know, and the children as your confidantes will have a purpose for finding out and communicating.

When they have exhausted their interest, read them Julius Silberberg's poem, "A Reply to Nancy Hanks," to hear one more possible point of view.

2. Writing/Specific Audience. "Pocahontas" might provide an opportunity for children to write Powhatan, Pocahontas' father, a letter upon her untimely death in England at the age of twenty-two.

3. Prewriting/Writing. "Pocahontas." This poem ends with a "lesson" that "runs/All through the ages:/Wild things die/In the very finest cages." Have the class explore this idea from their own experiences.

You might take one of two approaches to this writing:

(1) Have the class or small groups brainstorm their ideas in sketchy notes, recording their free associations, and then revise them into a draft once they have a sense of what they may have to say. OR

(2) have the children work individually, writing nonstop for a period of fifteen or twenty minutes of free writing, discovering thoughts and relationships of thoughts as they go. Share these discoveries with the class.

4. Prewriting/Writing. "Pocahontas." Play the devil's advocate and challenge the children to turn ideas around and see behind things as they seem to be. Pose the question: "What if Pocahontas and Powhatan were the truly civilized and were victims of Europeans who did not understand their meaningful way of life?" The response can be addressed to Powhatan or to a modern audience. Have the class share their writing on this topic. Then read to them the poem at the beginning of the Benets' book entitled "Indian," which will probably reinforce much of what they have reasoned and spoken. NOTE: It is important to let the kids think and write before you read "Indian."

5. Prewriting/Biography/History. "Ben Franklin" allows kids to see the human side of the man behind the legend. Have the class do more reading on Franklin. What else might have been included?

Have individuals in class choose an important American not included in the Benets' book, and do research about both the man/woman and the legend. They can share preliminary findings on a bulletin board with short paragraphs such as "I used to think that Martin Luther King . . . but now I have found . . ."

6. Prewriting/Writing/Letters/Editing. "U.S.A." focuses on the present and suggests the difficulty of prophesying about the future. This poem might give kids the impetus to write about living people whom they admire.

For example: Letters to Famous People. For prewriting, have kids list three or four famous people, then list questions they would have liked to ask these people. Have them narrow their choices to one or two people. Then as a class share the questions. Which are interesting and why. After the questions have been formulated and tested among colleagues, it is time to draft the letter. Before the letters go into a final form, have students read and edit each other's writing. Not all letters will receive answers, but the class will be able to share the excitement of getting responses from famous people.

7. Prewriting/Writing. Have the kids write their own epitaphs, either in verse or prose. Encourage them to discuss some of their wishes and goals in life. Look at the epitaphs of some famous people. Encourage them to see that history is not of the distant past, it is something that they can make.

8. Extensions. Written in 1933, A Book of Americans is necessarily limited in scope, you may want to encourage students to read Eve Merriam's I Am a Man: Ode to Martin Luther King, Jr., which weds poetry and biography; My Black Me: A Beginning Book of Black Poetry, edited by Arnold Adoff; some of Carl Sandburg's poetry about the common man, as in Wind Song; 2-Rabbit, 7-Wind, translated by Toni de Gerez, poems from ancient Mexico, especially those poems at the end of the book chanted in a dramatic encounter with twelve missionary friars after the Spanish conquest in 1524; The Whispering Wind: Poetry by Young American Indians, edited by Terry Allen. Each of these can lead to writing activities similar to those for the Benets' book.

Brooks, Gwendolyn. Bronzeville Boys and Girls. Harper, 1956.

Gwendolyn Brooks is a Pulitzer Prize-winning Black poet. In this collection of her poems for children, she reveals her concern for children who live in the city and who have strong feelings about such things in their life as playing ball, Christmas, and watching a seed grow. Too, Brooks presents feelings that are not often in poetry for children.

### FEELINGS

1. Prewriting/Writing. The poems about "Charles," "Keziah," and "Vern" deal with loneliness. Charles goes "inside himself," Keziah has "a secret place to go" and Vern says that when "no one loves you very" that "a pup's a good companion if a pup you've got."

After reading these poems a few times to the children, encourage them to talk about what makes them feel lonely. Invite them to show how they would act if they were lonely. Then invite them to write a description of someone who is lonely.

2. Prewriting/Writing. Read poems about people who are alone such as "Here I Am/Little Jumping Joan/When no one is with me/I'm all alone"; David McCord's "Secret Place" in Far and Few; Dorothy Aldis' "If I Had a Spoon" in All Together. Discuss the difference between being alone and the feeling of loneliness as expressed in some of the Brooks' poems. Invite the children to complete two different sentences: I like to be alone when . . . and I am lonely when . . . .

3. Prewriting/Role Play/Writing/Extensions. Select poems, and have the children select poems, which reflect other feelings: joy, fear, hope, love, anticipation, anger, hate, and create similar activities. For example, role play the feelings; complete the sentence: I feel angry when . . .; read a poem such as the nursery rhyme: "Jenny was so mad/She didn't know what to do/She stuck her finger in her ear/And broke it right in two"; read Carl Sandburg's "Proud Words."

4. Journal. Encourage the children to keep a journal in which they record how they are feeling each day. Encourage them to use similies such as: Today I feel like a frisky pup. Christina Rossetti's "My heart is like a singing bird" might be a good motivator for this writing activity. Journal can be very informal.

5. Library Skills/Organization/Editing. Encourage the children to collect and copy poems about feelings. After they collect many poems, encourage them to arrange them according to the feeling represented in the poem. They can make a table of contents and an index for their book of poems.

de Angeli, Marguerite. The Marguerite de Angeli Book of Nursery Rhymes.  
Doubleday, 1954.

Nursery rhymes are folk rhymes which have been passed down through the ages by word of mouth. The rhymes are meant to be recited aloud and almost all of them have exceedingly strong elements of rhythm and rhyme. Nursery rhymes appeal to children instinctively and children often use them spontaneously to punctuate physical activities such as swinging, playing on a see-saw or jumping rope.

In addition to strong elements of rhyme and rhythm, nursery rhymes also introduce children to memorable characters ("Humpty Dumpty," "Old King Cole"), unusual or little known words and phrases ("diller a dollar," "E was an Esquire," "Higgledy Piggledy") and the ordinary in extra-ordinary contexts ("the dish ran away with the spoon").

### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting. Select several nursery rhymes on a particular topic such as food: "Hot Cross Buns" (Buns), "Pat a Cake" (Tortillas), "Pease Porridge Hot" (Porridge), "The Queen of Hearts" (Tarts), "Girls and Boys Come Out To Play" (Pudding), "Little Tom Tucker" (Bread and Butter), "To Market, To Market" (Plumb Buns), "Polly Put the Kettle On" (Tea), "Simple Simon" (Pie), "The Lion and the Unicorn" (Plumb Cake), "Curly Locks" (Strawberries and Cream), "Jerimiah Obadiah" (Plumb Duff), "When Good King Arthur Ruled This Land" (Plumb Pudding).

Encourage the children to recite the traditional rhymes in unison after first saying the rhymes to them, thus setting the tempo and interpreting the rhyme for them. Then have the children list all the foods that have been mentioned in the rhymes and select their favorite foods.

2. Research/Writing/Editing. Direct the children to collect recipes for food items mentioned in the nursery rhymes and create a Cookbook of Mother Goose Rhyme Recipes. Each child can agree to research one recipe, copy it accurately, try it out at home or in school, and revise the text or ingredients as necessary before copying the recipe onto a card and putting it into the class recipe book. A group of copy editors can read the final copies to be sure everything is clearly and accurately written. Put the appropriate rhyme across from each recipe and create a book with a Table of Contents and an Index.

3. Survey/Interview/Report Writing. Encourage the children to conduct a survey of their peers, friends or relatives in order to find out which nursery rhymes and how many nursery rhymes they can recite.

First, create a recording form which lists most of the common rhymes but also has room to add rhymes. Each child then records the results of his survey on his recording form. (The question to be asked is: "Which nursery rhymes do you know?") Respondents are told to recite as many rhymes as they can remember and the child records each rhyme recited. Then the child compiles his results and writes a report of his findings. The children then share their reports and combine their findings.

Have them engage in an analysis of their results as a class. Which rhymes are most memorable and why?

4. Extensions. Extend the activities by encouraging children to write any jump rope ("Mary Mack, Mack, Mack") or playground ("Red Rover, Red Rover") or counting out rhymes ("Eeny-meany-miny-mo," "One Potato, Two Potato") which they know. Compile a class book after the children edit their rhymes for others to read.

Class discussion of these rhymes might include: how they are passed along orally and how they are different in different parts of the country (folklore); how many their parents remember of these rhymes (folklore); how they are similar or different in rhythm and content from the Mother Goose Rhymes (literary criticism); what they reveal or cultural attitudes (social history).

5. Prewriting/Extensions/Writing/Drama. Help older children rediscover nursery rhymes. Specific sources fourth through sixth graders will enjoy include: The Charles Adams Mother Goose, Wallace Tripp's Granfa' Grig Had a Pig or A Great Big Ugly Man Came Up and Tied His Horse to Me, and Jack Kent's Merry Mother Goose. These three cartoon artists extend the traditional rhymes ironically in illustration.

Have the class prepare written notes for a reader's theater performance of nursery rhymes. They can plan to do their production for another class in the school.

Other possible writing areas include: program notes, letters of invitation or permission to teachers in the school, a critique of the performance and so forth.

6. Extensions. There are many fine collections of Mother Goose and Nursery Rhymes which could be used for some of these same activities. Some of our favorites include: Brian Wildsmith's Mother Goose; the Caldecott Picture Books; the Opie's A Family Book of Nursery Rhymes; Jessie Wilcox Smith's Little Mother Goose; Philip Reed's Mother Goose and Nursery Rhymes; Mother Goose in Heiroglyphics (a rebus); Arthur Rackham's reprint entitled Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes; Kate Greenway's Mother Goose, or The Old Nursery Rhymes; Raymond Briggs' The Mother Goose Treasury; Andrew Lang's Nursery Rhyme Book; Blanche Fisher Wright's The Real Mother Goose.

Individual rhymes have been treated in some fine picture books such as: Peter Spier's London Bridge is Falling Down or To Market! To Market!; Susan Jeffers' Three Jovial Huntsmen; L. Leslie Brooks' Ring o' Roses.

Books which set the rhymes to music or include riddles and folk chants include: Remy Charlip's Mother, Mother, I feel Sick Send For the Doctor Quick Quick Quick; Richard Chase's Singing Games and Play-party Games; Duncan Emrich's The Hodgepodge Book: an Almanac of American Folklore Containing All Manner of Curious, Interesting and Out-Of-The-Way Information Drawn From American Folklore and Not To Be Found Anywhere Else in the World; May Justus' The Complete Peddler's Pack; John Langstaff's Frog Went a-Courting and Over in the Meadow; Carl Withers' Rocket in My Pocket, the Rhymes and Chants of Young Americans.

de Regniers, Beatrice S. et. al. Poems Children Will Sit Still For.  
Citation, 1969.

A flexible collection of poetry easy to introduce to your class.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Vocabulary Development. Read several poems aloud to your children. Include "Someone" by Walter de la Mare, "Galoshes" by Rhoda Bacmeister, "The North Wind Doth Blow" and "Firefly" by Elizabeth Maddox Roberts.

Provide sheets of different colored paper and invite the children to look at the paper for awhile and determine how the color makes them feel. Then encourage them to make a list of as many words as they can to describe how the color makes them feel. When they are ready have them mount a copy of a poem that has been read (and reproduced on ditto) on the appropriately colored paper. Remember that there is no "right answer" to this exercise. Invite the children to share why they selected the poem and the color. Invite them to share their list of "feeling" words.

2. Prewriting/Writing. Follow-up activity #1 by reading Christina Rossetti's "What is Pink?" and then invite the children to list things that they have observed which are different colors. Create a color diary (one page for each color entered) which can be added to as the child observes new things and how they make him/her feel. Hailstones and Halibut Bones by Mary O'Neil (a book of poems and a film version) would be an appropriate follow-up.

3. Prewriting/Extensions. Note that Rossetti's name when said aloud has a "poetic ring" to it. Encourage the children to chant their names and the names of people they know. Repeating the names several times and establishing the rhythm of each name are important. Encourage the children to create a list of the names that they think are the "best sounding." What images do the names evoke? Read Eleanor Farjeon's two poems of children's names: "Boys' Names" and "Girls' Names." Note the onomatopoeia and the concrete images evoked by the sounds of the names.



Farber, Norma. How Does It Feel To Be Old? Ill. Trina Schart Hyman. Dutton, 1979.

Norma Farber poses the same simple question on each page, "How does it feel to be old?" She then answers her own question simply but practically, and in a grandmotherly poetic language. In her answers to the impertinent question, the old woman subtly sorts out the truth of growing older as she confronts the curious child with honesty yet gentleness.

Trina Schart Hyman's evocative drawings blend the old woman's memories with an inquisitive child's imagery. The effect is haunting yet encouraging. Aging remains as disturbing as it will always be, but it is no longer as terrifying.

#### Classroom Activities

1. Prewriting/Journal/Letter/Editing. The old woman tells the young girl that she no longer must listen to parents' advice. Encourage your students to keep a journal for five days and each day record one piece of good advice received. On the sixth day, have them write a letter to the person whose advice they followed and explain to him/her how they benefited from the advice.
2. Writing/Character Sketch. The old woman misses her mother's voice and her father's way of taking her firmly by the hand. Have your class write a character sketch of their mothers or fathers as they remember them when they were a very young child. Begin a scrapbook of character sketches.
3. Writing/Greeting Card. The old woman tells the girl: "I'll scream if I will./And still/and yet,/nobody's made me cry in years./(I miss the hug comin', after the tears.)" Ask the class to design a greeting card to help her through one of these times when somebody made her cry, and compose the message to be printed on the card.
4. Writing/Directions. The old woman tells the girl: "Let's play! I don't mind losing at tic tac toe./I'll follow the leader--that's you, of course." Have students compose a set of rules or directions for a modern game the old woman has never played.
5. Writing/Description. The old woman gives the girl a ring and a watch: "And here's this ring; just put it away/till it fits. There'll come a day." Lead a discussion on what makes an item valuable. Have the children write a description of a special possession they would like to receive from a person whom they love, an object that might not be valuable, but which will help them remember her/him.  
Have the class compose a catalogue of important objects valuable because they will help remember a special person. Compose a description of an object that has special meaning to them that they would give to a special person.
6. Prewriting/Research/Writing The old woman tells the young girl: "If I were five or even ten,/I could live my life all over again." Encourage the children to read the old woman's statements carefully. What do they know about her? Brainstorm. Then compose a short biography of the old woman, as a class.



Hill, Helen, Agnes Perkins and Alethea Helbig, ed. Straight On Till Morning: Poems of the Imaginary World. Ill. Ted Lewin. Crowell, 1977.

This is a collection for every classroom, filled with unexpected delights: John Ciardi, E. E. Cummings, Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, Nikki Giovanni, Robert Graves, Langston Hughes, Ted Hughes, Kenneth Patchen, Theodore Roethke, Carl Sandburg, William Stafford, J. R. R. Tolkien and so forth.

1. Prewriting/Discussion/Writing/Postwriting. "Halfway Down" by A. A. Milne. Engage the children in a discussion of "special places." Do they have one? Or did they when they were younger? A place where they went when they were sad or scared or tired or lonely?

A. A. Milne has created a special place for Christopher Robin that seems contradictory and magic. Have individuals write or draw a description of their special place maximizing its specialness. After the children have shared their writing with their peers, have them read some other poems about interesting secret or special places such as Gwendolyn Brooks' "Keziah," "Charles," or David McCord's "This is My Rock," "Secret Place."

2. Prewriting/Discussion/Writing. "Rebels from Fairy Tales" by Hyacinthe Hill offers many directions for rich discussion. Consider the frog's view of humankind and their folktales, but also consider their own mythological view of the universe.

Writing from this could be a series of simple exercises in seeing from another point of view, or a more formal and structured narrative based on another folktale. Give the individual character a rounded personality. List some of the scenes in the story and invent motivations for the character's actions and feelings.

3. Prewriting/Discussion/Listing/Modeling. "The Magical Mouse" by Kenneth Patchen. The mouse in this poem is very like the mouse who stores sunlight, warmth and colors in the picture book Fredrick, by Leo Lionni. In both cases they do not do mousely duties, they follow their own dreams. Encourage your children to explore the images of what the mouse does and does not do, carefully. What is important to him or her? What do the last lines suggest? Ask them to create their own list of items. They might brainstorm as a class or dream on their own. Then encourage them to write their own verse. Use Patchen's format as a model: "I am the magical Cynthia/ I don't eat . . .").

4. Prewriting/Writing. "The Beast" by Theodore Roethke is very concretely illustrated by Ted Lewin. Read the poem aloud to the class without letting them see the picture. What kinds of animals do they "see" in the poem? (a unicorn perhaps?) After close reading of the second stanza, urging the class to pay special attention to the sounds of the words and the images they evoke ("sportive," "aimless," "shred of bone"), show them the Lewin illustration. How did he come to his conclusion? Do you agree that it is a possibility? Is it the only "right" answer? Why did the speaker weep?

Read the poem aloud to the class once again. But tell them that this time they are to imagine that they are the speaker. Don't read the second stanza. Instead say: "I saw something and it saw me." Pause. Then complete the poem. Ask the class what they saw. Give them time to consider--why did they falter? Why did they weep? Perhaps some would like to write their own second stanza using some of the techniques that Roethke uses to create suggestion and mystery.

Hoberman, Mary Ann. A House Is a House For Me. Ill. Betty Fraser. Viking, 1978.

What are all the definitions of house that you can think of? Hoberman's concepts of house range from bee hive, to a dog (a home for fleas), to a book (home for a story). Her alliterative phrases include such consonant repetitions as "envelopes, earmuffs and egg shells" and her assonance or repetition of vowel sounds is heard in her "A hole is a house for a mole or mouse." This large book with colorful and detailed illustrations is a pleasure to use with groups of children because they spontaneously begin to chant the repeated lines and finish certain rhymes. The rhythm and rhyme are infectious.

Mary Ann Hoberman, author of My Shoes Come In Twos, a popular collection of poems for younger children, has pushed the concept of house to its outermost limits. Her quatrains scan perfectly and contain surprising bits of repetition and lots of alliteration.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting. Just reading the book aloud will invite spontaneous response and provide children with the opportunity to anticipate the line "And a house is a house for me" and to come in on the correct beat with finishing a line like "There's nothing so snug as a bug in a rug."
2. Prewriting/Music. The essence of the text or the feeling of the poem can be emphasized by encouraging the children to develop a tune to go along with the rhyme. (If the teacher writes music easily he or she could demonstrate the process of writing the music down.)
3. Art/Writing/Editing. Ask the children to draw additional "houses." Then on a separate sheet of paper, ask the children to write a line that both identifies the house that they drew and is in keeping with Hoberman's rhythm and rhyme.  
  
Have the children share their lines of poetry and their pictures. Encourage them to edit their work and then place edited copies with the pictures and create a mural.
4. Prewriting/Listing. Look at the illustrations and list all the other houses Betty Fraser has pictured.

Larrick, Nancy. Piping Down the Valleys Wild. Dell, 1968.

A marvelous collection of poems which are favorites with elementary school children. Modern poets such as David McCord, Karla Kuskin, Myra Cohn Livingston, and Theodore Roethke are balanced with "old-timers" such as Eleanor Farjeon, Walter de la Mare, Rose Fyleman, and Christina Rossetti.

#### ANIMALS

Read several animal poems from sections "I'd take the hound with adrooping ears," "I heard a bird sing," and "I found new-born foxes." Some popular animal poems for younger children include: Fyleman's "Mice," Lindsay's "The Little Turtle" and "The Squirrel," Eliot's "The Rum Tum Tugger," and Chute's "My Dog."

Prewriting/Writing. Read Vachel Lindsay's "The Little Turtle" with "motions," and ask the children why they like it or think it is funny. The strong rhythm, repetition and egocentricity will be common answers.

Have the children investigate the FORM of the poem. Where are the repetitions and where are the rhymes. Then have them create their own poem (perhaps as a class) about another animal. For example: "There was a little grass snake/He lived near my home./He slithered down the driveway./He climbed on a stone." What other verbs might they use? How do they decide on the rhymes? Have them count syllables: "little turtle" has four; therefore, the animal in their poem should have four: "little grass snake," "big elephant," etc.

#### MOVEMENT

1. Prewriting. Read poems like Coatsworth's "Swift Things Are Beautiful," E-Yeh-Shure's Pueblo poem "Beauty," Yates' "The Lake Isle of Innisfree," and de la Mare's "A Child's Day." Then have the children in small groups or as a class move to the poems' rhythms and "feel." A large scarf or a piece of fabric may help the children to remember to move in a variety of ways: high, low, fast. .

2. Prewriting/Writing. Other poems which lend themselves to rhythmic explorations include: de Regniers' "Keep a Poem in Your Pocket," Livingston's "Whispers," Farjeon's "Mrs. Peck Pigeon," and McLeod's "Lone Dog." Ask the children to write down how the dancing or movement made them feel.

3. Prewriting/Modeling. Have the children close their eyes and sit up in their seats. Then ask them to "walk" to the rhythm as you read Milne's "Buckingham Palace." Read the poem emphasizing the regular rhythms and the repetition of the first two lines of each stanza and the regularity of the "says Alice." When you have finished the poem, ask them to report on how they moved their feet. Why do they think Milne changes the pace at the end of each stanza? Have they ever seen soldiers marching in step? Perhaps the next time you are in gym the children can march down one side to the first stanza, stop/turn (says Alice) and then march back to the second, stop/turn and so forth.

The point of view in this poem is quite complex. Help the children to articulate the three "voices"--the narrator, Christopher Robin's observations, and Alice's matter-of-fact information. Have them write a short statement using this technique, perhaps based on a family event. It could be three sentences long: the omniscient setting statement, the child's observation, her mother's comment.

Lear, Edward. A Book of Nonsense. Random House.

Edward Lear is one of the first nonsense poets for children. He has written an abundance of limericks that caricature people and that children love to read and imitate. He is also responsible for some of the most memorable nonsense narratives ever conceived--"The Jumblies," "The Owl and the Pussy Cat."

This volume is a collection of most of his rhymes appropriate for children. However, there are many other collections and picture books which contain some of his most popular poems.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Drama/Writing/Editing. "The Jumblies." Lear's Jumblie creatures, whose "heads are green and . . . hands are blue" embark on an impossible journey against the advice of their friends: "They went to sea in a sieve they did,/In a sieve they went to sea." In addition to strong rhythm and rhyme, Lear creates unusual images ("a tobacco-pipe mast" and "a monkey with lollipop paws"), lovely alliteration ("pinky paper") and delicious assonance ("silvery bees").

After reading the poem in a lively, dramatic manner several times and on several different occasions, and after having the children join you in reciting parts they know by heart, encourage them to act out scenes from "The Jumblies": their leave-taking, sailing on the seas, their arrival in the "Land of the Western Sea," and their return home. Several options can be exercised as to format: part of the class can act out all the scenes or scenes can be divided among several groups; the teacher can narrate or the students as a group or individually can narrate the playing; the narration can be recorded on tape or live. (Be sure to keep the drama rhythmic in the spirit and structure of Lear's poem.)

This can become a formal occasion for sharing. Write letters of invitation to a performance. Each child can select the persons that he or she will write to (parents, another class, the principal). In addition, the class can work together on creating a play program and advertising posters. Work with the children on careful editing of personal letters, the program, and the posters.

2. Prewriting/Listing. "The Jumblies" sail to a land "all covered with trees" and buy an assortment of things. Read the description of the items aloud several times and then encourage the children to first list the items that they think sound particularly "nice" or "interesting" or "unusual." Encourage them to speculate on why the Jumblies might have bought each item. Also encourage them to list the purchased items that they think would be particularly useful to the Jumblies and write an explanation of why the items would be useful. In addition, encourage the children to list items which they would take with them if they were to embark on a Jumblie-like journey, and to explain why they made the selections that they did. Be sure to encourage children to share their lists and explanations with one another. Let them compare their lists with that of the Jumblies. Is the balance between "practical" and "imaginative" similar?

3. Extension. Lear features the Jumblies in another nonsense song, "The Dong with the Luminous Nose" so you may want to share it with the children too. Other nonsense songs by Lear that the child may enjoy are "The Owl and the Pussy Cat," "The Table and the Chair," "Mr. and Mrs. Discobolos," "The Pobble Who Has No Toes," "Calico Pie," and "Mr. and Mrs. Spiky Sparrow."

Merriam, Eve. It Doesn't Always Have to Rhyme. Atheneum, 1964.

Eve Merriam is a recent winner of the NCTE Award for Excellence in Poetry and in this volume her many-sided talent is evident. She departs from traditional verse forms to open children's eyes and minds to the rich variety of poetry available to them.

Merriam's poetry excites the senses and encourages the reader to rethink what poetry is or can be. She tells the reader in "Inside a Poem" that "It doesn't always have to rhyme" and goes on to explore how rhythm and sound effects evoke images. In "How to Eat A Poem," she tells the reader to be direct, "bite in . . . pick it up with your fingers." Her collection of poems suggests that poetry is for everyone and her poems are full of the textures and tastes and crunchiness of words.

1. Prewriting/Research/Writing. In some of Merriam's poetry the reader becomes aware of a poet working with tools of words to invent poetry, tools such as a dictionary and thesaurus. Encourage your students to search for synonyms through poetry. Have them follow the lead of Merriam's verse to write their own poems.

Look closely at her patterns. In "Spring Fever," she attaches verbs to common names to give a sense of people with spring fever. In "Beware, or Be Yourself," she coaxes the reader with an alliterative use of "be" words. In "Be My Non-Valentine," she enjoys reporting that she has searched through her thesaurus and has found just the right synonym for you.

2. Prewriting/Comparisons/Writing. Have the children read "End of Winter" and "Metaphor" and investigate Merriam's use of metaphor and simile. Then encourage them to try creating comparisons in verse or prose themselves. Or have them try to write a comparison in one form and then translate it into another.

3. Prewriting/Free Writing. "Inside a Poem" and "How to Eat a Poem." Find another poem or two about poetry (such as Lillian Moore's "Go With the Poem") and have the children develop an explanation of what poetry is in a 15-20 minute free writing period. Let them share their definitions in class discussion.

4. Extensions/Patterned Writing. Kenneth Koch has said that "Teaching is not really the right word for what takes place; it is more like permitting the children to discover something they already know." Help the children find that writing can be a means of discovering and knowing. Use some of the word patterns Kenneth Koch uses in Wishes, Lies and Dreams to get children started writing poetry: "I wish . . .yyyyy" "I used to . . . but not . . ."

Explore Robert Froman's collection of concrete verse, Street Poems, for patterns that might lead to picture poems.

The ancient deskbook, The Pillow Book of Sei Shonagon, translated by Ivan Morris (Columbia Univ. Press, 1967), is an original book of lists, commonplace but provocative. Read selected passages to provoke your kids to write.

5. Extensions/Research/Sharing. Encourage the children to explore poetry by reading. Have them compile a poetry notebook or deskbook. Tell them when they find a poem they like and want to keep (or share) to add it to their notebook. Don't demand that they explain why they like it.

Establish a poetry bulletin board on which students can pin up a poem or poems they like with a signed note to classmates.

Let children design covers for their deskbooks, and just before you see their product, ask them to write non-stop for twenty minutes telling you what they discovered and how genuine their search for elements for their book was.

Prelutsky, Jack. Nightmares: Poems to Trouble Your Sleep. Ill. Arnold Lobel. Greenwillow Books, 1976.

Prelutsky, Jack. The Headless Horesman Rides Tonight: More Poems to Trouble Your Sleep. Ill. Arnold Lobel. Greenwillow Books, 1980.

In the vein of Edgar Allan Poe, Jack Prelutsky writes a strongly lyrical and melodic rhymed verse taut with deeply disturbing chords of spooky stuff, remote enough so as not to terrify, exaggerated enough to be funny, and written in archaic gothic language to wake the dead. His visions include trolls, ghouls, werewolves and bogeymen. Great for reading aloud.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Choral Reading. "The Haunted House." Prelutsky can draw deliciously upon the rhythms and toothy strains of his mentor Poe. This poem is reminiscent of "The Raven" with its "Filmy visions, ever flocking,/dart through chambers, crudely mocking,/rudely rapping, tapping, knocking,/on the crumbling doors." Encourage your students to tape record this poem with moaning and howling sound effects.

2. Prewriting/Vocabulary Development/Writing. Prelutsky's poems are filled with the sound effects of language. Have the children search for especially vivid images such as "He cracks their bones and snaps their backs" or "with the click and the clack/and the chitter and the chack/and the clatter and the chatter/of their bare bare bones." Then ask them to imitate the onomatopoeia, alliteration, consonance, repetition, etc. of his style and to create a vivid word picture of something in their real or imaginary world.

3. Prewriting/Research/Writing/Poetry. Prelutsky's poems abound in creatures from the myth and folklore of magic. Have the kids research and record the origins of one of the creatures that appeals to them. They can work their findings into an introduction to their choral reading performance, or they can write or report on their research for a class bulletin board or publication, or they can use the information to give authenticity to some of their own creative writing.

4. Writing/Plot. "The Night I Bumped Into the Bogeyman." Have the children translate Prelutsky's poems into a prose narrative. Encourage them to extend the language and the atmosphere into their own language. Encourage them to use repetition to build a suspenseful ending.



Roethke, Theodore. Dirty Dinky and Other Creatures. Selected by Beatrice Roethke and Stephen Lushington. Doubleday, 1973.

The roads to nonsense and pure, powerful poetry join together and continue, side by side, through a child's world of fact, fantasy, fun, and feeling in this collection of poetry written by a man who grew up inhabiting his father's greenhouses in Saginaw, Michigan. Some of the poetry will read itself; some will stimulate children to find its form; some will challenge. The reading difficulty is varied, but with a little coaching and an enthusiastic lead, children will be both touched and tickled by Roethke's poetry.

1. Prewriting/Writing. "Dirty Dinky." You might explain to students that nonsense poetry is funny because things are used that don't normally belong together. Words are invented, played with, twisted, omitted for effect. Details are described inappropriately or left out when the reader expects to hear them--in general, logic is turned inside out. After they have enjoyed "Dinky" (several times) ask kids if Roethke uses any of these nonsense devices. Have them write a paragraph telling about how Roethke uses these devices to make people laugh.

2. Prewriting/Writing. "Dirty Dinky." The verses about Dinky lend themselves to mimicry. They make use of questions, suppositions, testimonies, and hypothetical situations involving various kinds of weather in which a person just knows Dirty Dinky has been around. Have each child invent one of these moments when Dinky has to be present. Let them find the form that suits them, but insist that they use concrete details to create the moment.

3. Prewriting/Extensions/Writing. When does nonsense become sense? When does sense become nonsense? You might use "The Bat" or "The Sloth" to start kids on an exploration of fact and fantasy, sense and nonsense. Have them find some poems which are a blend of the two, which separate the two.

Two poets' works readily come to mind: Shel Silverstein's Where the Sidewalk Ends and The Light in the Attic; and John Ciardi's many books, especially The Man Who Sang the Sillies and You Read to Me, I'll Read to You. Once the children have collected some of this poetry, have them tell you in writing what is sense and what is nonsense in it.

Or, have them write about something that has happened to them in their lives which illustrates how the serious can quickly become ridiculous or the ridiculous suddenly serious.

4. Prewriting/Writing. "The Meadow Mouse." This is one of the more serious poems in this collection. It tells of Roethke finding a trembling baby mouse and making a home for it in a shoebox. Then comes the day when the shoebox is empty and he ponders what might have happened to the mouse.

Have the children rewrite the powerful last stanza in terms of their own associations. Perhaps start them with the line: "When I think of the mouse, I think of . . . ." Encourage them to list several or numerous things that come to mind and then end their stanza with Roethke's line: "All things innocent, hapless, forsaken."

Or, have the children write in prose about an experience they have had finding an animal or taking care of a pet and how the experience has led them to wonder about that animal or other things.



## POETRY ANTHOLOGIES

Adoff, Arnold. Black Out Loud. Dell, 1970.

An anthology of Black poets "compiled to introduce the works of Black poets to the young brothers and sisters of all races." Poems are about being Black, being a poet, Black heroes, attitudes towards White America, and being loved. Poets include Langston Hughes, Nikki Giovanni, Quandra Prettyman.

Allen, Terry. The Whispering Wind. Doubleday, 1972.

An anthology of poetry by young American Indians from many tribes. Poems revolve about the problem of being an Indian in contemporary culture.

Arbuthnot, May Hill. Time For Poetry. Scott Foresman, 1959.

Classic anthology for the classroom. Chapters include subjects as diverse as people, animals, play make-believe, and so on. Generally geared for the younger child. Large index.

Bennett, George and Paul Malloy. Cavalcade of Poems. Scholastic, 1969.

Intended for older students, the anthology has two chapters on observation that can be used with elementary children.

Dunning, Stephen, Edward Lueders, and Hugh Smith. Reflections on a Gift of Watermelon Pickle . . . Scholastic, 1966.

This favorite anthology contains contemporary poems on a variety of topics by well known poets including Sandburg, Shapiro, Ciardi, Merriam, Frost and others.

Eaton, M. Joe and Malcolm Smith. Grab Me a Bus . . . Scholastic, 1973.

This is a collection of award-winning poetry by high school students.

Froese, Victor. Poetry: Century of City. Univ. of Manitoba, 1974.

A paperback anthology of poems by elementary children written to celebrate the centennial of Winnipeg. (Gallery Shop, Winnipeg Art Gallery, 300 Memorial Boulevard, Winnipeg, Manitoba [R3C 1V1])

Hopkins, Lee Bennett and Misha Arenstein. Faces and Places. Scholastic, 1973.

Paperback anthology of poems about people, places, sports, space and more.

Hopkins, Lee Bennett and Misha Arenstein. Time to Shout. Scholastic, 1973.

This paperback anthology contains poems about time: "is all times"; "is a year"; "for our earth"; "for short thoughts"; "to laugh."

Hopkins, Lee Bennett and Misha Arenstein. Potato Chips and a Slice of Moon. Scholastic, 1976.

Paperback with sections on animals, cities, sports, seasons and other topics.

Malloy, Paul. Poetry U.S.A. Scholastic, 1968.

This paperback anthology of poems about American people in love, play and war includes poems by such women as Brooks, Millary, Dickinson, Lowell, Swenson, Miles, McGinley and Moore.

## OBSERVING

Faces and Places: "The Dragonfly" by Chisoku; "Reflections" by Lillian Moore; "Shells" by Lillian Moore.

Potato Chips and a Slice of Moon: "All These I Hear" by Dahlov Ipcar; "Sound of Water" by Mary O'Neill; "Hot Enough to See" by Robert Froman.

Reflections on a Gift of Watermelon Pickle: "Crows" by David McCord; "Seal" by William Jay Smith.

Grab Me a Bus: "Stones" by Merle Bachman; "Spinster" by Jerry Chadwick.

Time For Poetry: "A Kitten" by Eleanor Farjeon.

1. Prewriting. Each poem appeals to one or more of the senses. Select half a dozen from the list choosing several of the senses and ask children to be prepared to tell which sense the author appealed to and how. Discuss other words the author could have included to appeal to the same sense. For instance, in "The Dragonfly," Chisoku is caught by the size of the dragonfly's eye. He does not mention the extraordinary wings. Why do you think the author tells about one feature and omits others?

2. Prewriting/Guided Reverie. The purpose of this exercise in fantasy is visualization. Dim the light. Play appropriate music (without words). Encourage children to relax on chair or floor. You may do this by tensing body parts from head down and then relaxing each part in reverse from toes to head. Ask children to close their eyes and imagine a TV screen in their mind and enjoy the pictures that come as you tell a story. Tell the story slowly and allow time to imagine.

For example: "You are walking down a country road in summer. It is hot and very still. You can hear insects buzzing and see fluffy white clouds in the sky. Now you come to a path leading into the woods, but first you must climb over a fence. Isn't it cool in here? Much cooler now. Think how the path feels under your feet. Don't trip on that log! That's it . . . climb over. See, there are some flowers blooming by the path. Stop to examine them. Let's go on. Oh, there's a little animal running by that log. Let's tiptoe so we won't scare him. Now the woods are becoming deeper and darker. Look! Our path is dividing. Decide which way you will go. I thought you'd choose that way. There's a little clearing covered with grass. Let's go closer and see it. Something is in the clearing. Walk around and examine it from all directions. Listen! I hear a sound. It's very beautiful. (Pause a minute for the fantasy to continue) . . . Time to come back. Wake up slowly. Open your eyes. Stretch. Let's share what we saw."

Post-reverie discussion might include questions such as: What kind of road did you walk on--paved, dirt, gravel? What insects did you hear? What sounds did they make? How did they fly? What kind of fence did you climb? How did you get over, or under, or through? What did you see on the path? What color were the flowers? Can you describe the leaves? What animal did you see? Where did he go? Which path did you take?

Continue the discussion in this manner. Encourage the children to give you descriptive words. Put them on the board. Later have the children try to recreate the feeling and image of one part of the reverie in a sentence.

3. Prewriting/Listmaking/Vocabulary Development/Comparison. A trip to a field, a pond, the woods, the lake . . . can provide a common stimulus. It is highly desirable to have small groups if you can manage guides. Have groups find a quiet place and then sit still for five minutes. During this time they should not "think," but open themselves to sights, sounds, smells and feelings.

Later have children write words under: "I saw," "I heard," "I felt" and so forth. Expand vocabulary by using specific verbs and names of plants and animals.

A) Did you see a rhythm? Hear a rhythm? Feel a rhythm? Poetry is an art, and art has rhythm or repetition. What was a pattern in your experience? What was important to you? Something of beauty? Something strange?

B) Lead out from the poems that you read to the children and ask them to focus on methods of comparison. For example, in "Shells," Lillian Moore describes shells as "magic bones of the sea." In "Reflections," she says that reflections in store windows are like shadow people, ghosts, phantoms. As poems are read, have students note phrases suggesting comparisons--in "All These I Hear": "red feathery gills," "rainbow scales." Ask your students to employ these methods in making comparisons from their observations.

4. Writing. If "The Sound of Water" is one of the poems selected for reading by the teacher, focus on the delightful list of verbs describing water. Bulletin boards could be made of similar lists of verbs describing walking, crying, the wind, etc.

If "Stones" is one of the poems chosen, contrast the way the stones in the poem might have felt to the toes that discovered them and the fingers that analyzed them.

In "Crows" by McCord, lead the students to see the simple pattern employed in the form. Can they pick a topic and write ten "I like" statements?

#### REMEMBERING

Cavalcade of Poems: "Memory of Lake Superior" by George Dillon.

Black Out Loud: "Knoxville, Tennessee" by Nikki Giovanni; "The Raid" by Langston Hughes.

Time for Poetry: "Beach Fire" by Frances Frost.

Poetry, Century of a City: "I Used To Be A Tree" by Chuck Brenton; "I Used To Be " (a car) by Bernie Smolik; "I Used To Want" by David Shott.

Whispering Wind. "The Parade" by Liz Sohappy.

1. Prewriting. These poems fall in three categories: personal experience ("Memory of Lake Superior, "Knoxville, Tennessee," "Beach Fire"); memory of a people ("The Parade," "The Raid"); and written by children who imagine themselves to be a thing. Read these poems aloud. Do any of the children have similar experiences? List specifics which remain in your mind after hearing each poem.

Is it possible to remember events that happened to your people, rather than yourself? Who is remembering in these poems? What is being remembered? What words help you to know how the author felt about the event?

2. Prewriting/Guided Reverie/Writing. (See previous reverie experience for format.) Have the TV screen in the mind imagine that the dial can turn back the years. Share oral accounts of early memories. Draw students' attention to the specifics they saw, heard, felt. At this point some students may wish to write a draft in a form of their choice. (Comic strip, story, autobiography)

3. Prewriting/Listening/Interview. As people become older they often remember early experiences very vividly. Encourage students to interview or tape record older citizens in their family/community about the earliest experiences they remember. This may lead to the draft of a story or a feature article.

4. Pantomime/Poetry. "I Used to be" poems can be just for fun. Prewriting may involve pantomime for the rest of the class to guess what they used to be. After the object or activity is guessed, the class may suggest words which could be used in the poem. The teacher may select a "secretary" to copy words and give on a card to each actor.

"I Used to be" poems may suggest or develop myths, tall tales, or silly limericks. A student who has much difficulty getting words on paper can be loaned a "scribe."

5. Extension. Poems "remembered" about the history of a people may be suggested by prose books such as Hah-Nee of the Cliff Dwellers, Sounder, Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry and so forth.

### PLAYING

Faces and Places: "Skiing" by Bobby Katz; "Foul Shot" by Edwin Hoey.

Potato Chips and a Slice of Moon: "Marbles" by Kathleen Frazer.

Poetry U.S.A.: "Cobb Would Have Caught It" by Robert Fitzgerald.

The Whispering Wind: "Celebration" by Alonzo Lopez.

Reflections on a Gift . . .: "The Base Stealer" by Robert Francis.

1. Prewriting/Motivation/Vocabulary Building. Bring the sports page of a newspaper and read excerpts including sports language. Ask volunteers to explain terms. Begin a class glossary.

Read some poems aloud and ask the listeners to note words which have a special meaning.

2. Writing/Expanding or Contracting Time. The whole poem, "Foul Shot," concerns the last two minutes of a basketball game tied 60-all. Hoey stretches the moment by describing the player waiting at the foul line, and then listing the sequence of his movements as if in slow motion--"seeks out the line with his feet," "soothes his hand along his uniform," "gently drums the ball against the floor," "measures the waiting net," and so on.

"Cobb Would Have Caught It" contains a section which expands the ritual between pitcher and catcher preceding the throw.

Invite students to tell situations in which longer periods of time seem short. How do authors manipulate time? (Discuss lapses, flack-backs, etc.) Invite students to write sentences describing a short period of time which is expanded by description containing many phrases as in Hoey or Fitzgerald.

### FEELING

Faces and Places: "This Thing Called Space" by Myra Cohn Livingston; "Message from a Mouse Ascending in a Rocket" by Patricia Hubbell; "The Travelers" by Patricia Hubbell.

Potato Chips and A Slice of Moon: "If I Could Be an Astronaut" by Bobbi Katz; "Three Skies" by Claudia Lewis.

Reflections on a Gift . . .: "Sonic Boom" by John Updike.

Cavalcade: "The Eagle" by Alfred Tennyson; "Parachutist" by Samuel Hazo.

Whispering Wind: "Eagle Flight" by Alonzo Lopez.

1. Prewriting. The poems contrast man's ambivalence about flight and what it represents. For the Indian poet, Alonzo Lopez, the flight of the eagle represents man's aspiration to rise above our present earth (and way of life). On the other side, Patricia Hubbell makes an astronaut mouse yearn to return to his wife and family. Ask the children to listen for phrases that give a clue to the poets' feelings as you read the poems aloud.

2. Prewriting/Listing/Vocabulary Development. After listening to the poems, think about verbs for flying. What flies? How does it fly? [an arrow flies; an eagle soars; a feather flutters . . .] Begin a list and let students contribute for a bulletin board.

3. Personification. Help the children find personification in the poems. For example, in "The Traveler," the satellite turns to the moon in wonder: [It] "muses over Africa, Afganistan, Alaska." In "Sonic Boom," "the ceiling shudders." Ask your class: What is the author doing? Can you do it? Write a short descriptive passage.

### FEELING AND BECOMING

Faces and Places: "Tree Climbing" by Kathleen Frazer.

Time to Shout: "The Boy Fishing" by E.J. Scovell.

Potato Chips and a Slice of Moon: "Growing: For Louis" by Myra Cohn

Livingston; "How I Got To Be A Princess" by Bobbi Katz.

Black Out Loud: "Children's Rhymes" by Langston Hughes; "A Love Song" by Raymond Richard Patterson.

1. Prewriting. These poems have to do with the way we feel about ourselves and what we may become. "Tree Climbing" and "The Boy Fishing" have to do with being alone. Listen and find out why the people are alone, and how they feel about it. In "Growing" and "How I Got . . .," someone changes unexpectedly, or else he doesn't change as he expects. In "Children's Rhymes" and "A Love Song," you must decide how the writer feels.

2. Dialect. "Children's Rhymes." Why does Langston Hughes say: "I ain't sent" and "What don't bug them white kids . . .," etc.? How does his manner of speaking contribute to the meaning of the poem? What does the poem tell about how Hughes feels?

3. Brainstorming/Listing. "Growing: For Louis." What's "tough"? Louis thinks it's tough being short. In small groups, brainstorm for five minutes and come up with a list of things that are "tough" for you. Save ideas for possible drafts.

4. Prewriting/Bulletin Board. On the watch for rhymes? Did you hear the rhyming couplets in "A Love Song"? Invite the class to write and illustrate their own rhyming couplets for a bulletin board.

5. Prewriting. "How I Got To Be A Princess." What do you want to be? Bobbi Katz tells how thrilled she was to be told she looked like a princess. What would you like to hear? Write an exact quotation on a piece of paper and save it in your folder. Thinking about how hearing these words could change your life might be the seed for a future story.

Aardema, Verna. Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears. Ill. Leo and Diane Dillon. Dial, 1975. (Dell)

When the iguana sticks twigs in his ears to avoid listening to a pesty mosquito, a chain of disasters begins and ends with the death of an owlet and Mother Owl's refusal to wake the sun. In the dark of the endless night, the animals gather to determine the responsible party. Everyone involved blames another for the catastrophe--except the mosquito. To this day the mosquito has been dealing with its guilty conscience by whining in people's ears looking for forgiveness.

This rich telling of a West African folktale by Michigan author, Verna Aardema, follows a *pourquoi* format. In addition to the Dillon's magnificent decorative illustrations, the story is filled with the sounds of animals as they move through the forest.

1. Prewriting/Vocabulary Development. Aardema uses powerful, descriptive verbs in this story. Before examining the book closely, list the animals in the story and have the class brainstorm verbs that are often associated with each animal. Then go to the book and find the verbs that Aardema used.
2. Prewriting/Onomatopoeia/Creative Movement. In a large group, make a list of the sounds appearing through the story and the animals they describe. For example, "krik, krik, krik" (rabbit) and "wasawusu, wasawusu" (snake). Ask the children to work in groups to list other animals and create appropriate sounds for each. Role playing the movements of each animal may help generate new sounds.
3. Prewriting/Writing. Many folktales are *pourquoi* or "why" stories that explain the origin of certain animal's characteristics. Make a list of animals or insects which have particularly outstanding characteristics and have small groups or individuals pick one to write about, i.e., bee sting; skunk-small; ladybug-spots; spider-web; ant-hill; caterpillar-tents.
4. Prewriting/Writing. Have the group discuss how different animals might react when frightened. Direct the children to animals that are native to the Michigan forest. Ask the children to choose one animal and write a one paragraph story about how it reacts to a frightening experience.

Rewrite Aardema's story using native wild animals. Or, change the setting to a farm and rewrite. Or, use a pet theme.

Make the rewriting a group project rather than an individual assignment. As a group project each individual student can contribute a certain animal's reaction, while the group as a whole can write the beginning and conclusion to fit their tale.



Three hungry soldiers trick the inhabitants of a small village into sharing their food with them by pretending they have the ability to make soup from a stone. Imagine that! The book has an easy flowing manner which keep the attention of the children. The audience catches on early to the trickery of the soldiers, but the villagers do not.

1. Prewriting/Writing/Recipes/Editing. Discuss what was put into the soup and then ask children to name other soups. List these soups on the board and have children list what might go into them.

Just about every family has a recipe for a favorite homemade soup. Ask the children to ask someone at home how that soup is made. (Don't tell them that they are going to be writing the recipe.) After the children discuss their soups, have the children write their recipes. Help them during the writing by reminding them to list the ingredients and the amounts first and then the directions for completing the soup. Let them look at a cookbook for format.

After the recipes are finished have the children take them home to have them checked by the "cook" and revise if necessary. You might want them collected in a Soup Cook for Christmas or Mothers' Day.

2. Extensions/Comparison/Writing. Many folk tales appear in slight different versions in different countries. This is true with Stone Soup. In addition to Marcia Brown's version, this story appears in a Scholastic paperback and in many basal readers. A Swedish version is called Nail Soup and the Russian version Hatchet Gruel. The following activities could be used with this story or variant versions of any popular folk tale. (See Bernice Cullinan's Literature and the Child (178-179) for bibliography of twenty of these stories.)

- (a) Begin a collection of these stories in the library. Create a spot in the room for browsing and informal comparisons.
- (b) As individuals or in groups, complete a more formal comparison chart.
- (c) Examine the various illustrations in the different versions of the stories and decide which are the most effective.
- (d) Show the group an illustration from one of the books before you read it to them and ask each child to write a short, quick paragraph to accompany that picture. Have volunteers share their paragraphs with the group comparing similarities and differences. Encourage descriptive words and complex sentences. Try this several times.
- (e) Have the class or individuals write another version of one of the tales you have been studying. It might be set in the present. The children may want to illustrate their story, edit it, and make a booklet or bulletin board.



Chase, Richard. Jack and The Three Sillies. Ill. Joshua Tolford.  
Houghton Mifflin, 1950.

The Three Sillies is an old American folk tale retold by Chase in a traditional fashion. Story line and the style make it an excellent book for a story teller. Soft, warm pictures add to the humor.

Several countries have their own version of this story. Two examples are Those Foolish Molboes and The Lazies.

### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Writing. There are many versions of this tale. Find another version and read to the class. Ask the children to brainstorm different ways people could act silly. Have the children work in groups of three and write their own story, using the same frame, but describing different silly people.

Or relate some activity you've done that you think is silly. Ask the children if they can think of a time when they or someone they know acted silly. The objective is to help children see that everyone does silly things some time or other, and that consequently, people should try to be less critical of others. Have the children write a "Silly Story" replacing Jack with themselves.

2. Writing. Ask children to rewrite the ending so that Jack fares better than he did in the story. For instance, the last object he ends up with could bring him good fortune. When his wife arrives back home she would discover that Jack isn't as silly as she thought.

3. Writing. Have the children rewrite the story to fit the format of a newspaper story. Discuss the form of newspaper writing, using examples from, preferably, one written at their level.

4. Prewriting/Writing/Drama. This story lends itself very well to being acted out, because few characters are involved and the plot is simple and direct. The children can write the story into play form working in groups. There are eleven characters in the play with a possibility of having more non-speaking parts (the mule, the people who go to watch the old man trying to rescue the moon). Divide the class into two groups, each group can write the play out, decided on props and present it for the other.

5. Extension/Prewriting/Social Studies. Introduce the class to Lillian Bason's Those Foolish Molboes (Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, 1977). This is a collection of three Scandinavian "sillies" folk tales. Have the students find the peninsula of Mols on a map of Denmark. Then have them investigate the tales and list all of the indications that the book takes place in Scandinavia. What elements are universal? Compare the tales to this Richard Chase story.

6. Extensions. Richard Chase has collected many excellent tales: The Jack Tales (folktales from the southern Appalachians); Grandfather Tales (American-English folk tales).

Domanska, Janina. The Best of the Bargain. Greenwillow Books, 1977.

In this adaption of a Polish folktale Hugo, the hedgehog, and his neighbor, Olek, the fox decide to share the bounty of their harvest. Although the two appear to work well together during the growing season, the "clever" fox is outwitted by his cunning friend and ends up with less than his fair share. In fact, even with the intervention of a judge the fox loses all of his harvest. After two years of getting less than the "best of the bargain," Olek decides to avoid any further "bargaining" with his neighbor.

The illustrations in this book are bright, clear and amusing. The animals' hats are set at just the right angle to tease a smile from any reader and seeing the fox and the hedgehog plow their fields together is an invitation to a giggle.

1. Prewriting/Research/Writing. The hedgehog was able to trick the fox so successfully because he was very aware of what vegetables grew above the ground and which grew below. Design a garden for the hedgehog for the first season of the bargain which would include a greater variety of vegetables which would grow above the ground. Then design another garden where the harvest would be below the ground. Ask students to write which year they would like to eat with the hedgehog.
2. Prewriting/Listing/Writing. Foxes are traditionally known for their cleverness but in this story the fox is continually outwitted. As a group list animals and characteristics for which they are usually known. For example, messy pigs, lazy lizards, wise owls. Then switch adjectives so you have wise pigs, messy lizards, and lazy owls. Stories could be written and shared concerning the interactions of any two of these characters. Could any two make a bargain?
3. Extension. Read Russell and Lillian Hoban's A Bargain for Frances and compare Frances and Thelma's experience with Hugo's and Olek's. Discuss problems that can result from bargains.
4. Extension. Several authors have devoted their careers to retelling folktales or to creating new folktale-like stories. Another approach to the study of folktales would be to focus on one of these authors and his or her works. Janina Domanska is an author who collects and illustrates many popular tales.

Have your class investigate other retellings by Janina Domanska:

I Saw a Ship A-Sailing (Macmillan, 1972), Din Dan Don: It's Christmas (Greenwillow Books, 1975), The Turnip, (Macmillan, 1969), King Krakus and the Dragon (Greenwillow Books, 1979), and If All the Seas Were One Sea (Caldecott Honor Book):

Felton, Harold. John Henry and His Hammer. Ill. Aldvin A. Watson. Knopf, 1950.

John Henry has a lyrical quality, reflecting the folk song, "John Henry," the basis of the book. The story is told in a straight forward, serious manner, reflecting the goodness and strength of John Henry. Felton adds details to the story line of the song, and John Henry's character is developed. In this book he becomes a real person, not just a legend.

### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Writing. Discuss with children the details in the beginning of the story that make John Henry's birth special. Help them to understand that such details set the stage for the story that follows. (The beginning tips us off to the idea that this is no ordinary baby.) Have the children write about the birth of someone special. Ask for volunteers to read their efforts aloud.

2. Prewriting/Music/Narrative/Editing. Play a recording of the song. Discuss differences between the song and the story. Bring in two or three records that tell a story (for instance: Coal Miner's Daughter).

Using a narrative song as a basis, have the children write a story, adding detail and substance as Felton did. Have the children revise, edit and proofread these. Share with another grade.

3. Prewriting/Writing. Discuss the development of John Henry. Bring out his singlemindedness of purpose in life to become a steel driving man. Have the children write a story using Felton's John Henry as a model. Characters should want to be one thing and the story should be an explanation of how that happens.

4. Extension. Felton also wrote Mike Fink (Dodd, Mead and Co., 1960). The style is different from John Henry and Pecos Bill and less desirable. The story is told in a straight forward manner and makes it more difficult for children to distinguish fact from fiction. This is especially serious when Indians and animals are treated as objects to be killed. Lead more advanced students in a critical discussion.

Felton, Harold. Pecos Bill. Knopf, 1958.

Felton has written a lively account of the life of Pecos Bill. The narration is very tongue-in-cheek with an abundance of cheerful exaggerations. He refers to his "truthfulness" throughout the story as contrasted to tall tales told by others. Children will have no trouble separating fact from fiction and will be able to learn much of American history while being entertained by reading a fast paced story.

Because Pecos Bill does not seem real, there is no character development. Rather, the book is a series of adventures, based on real life situations. Felton uses a wealth of references and detail to create a story that never lags.

1. Prewriting/Writing. Discuss with the children folk heroes of America (Paul Bunyon, Davy Crockett, Daniel Boone). Ask where the ideas of folk heroes come from? Are the stories true? Are they real people? Composites of real people? What qualities do folk heroes have? Have students write a list of qualities Pecos Bill had and share the lists orally. Write the qualities on the board as the children read them from their lists.

Review this list of qualities. What is special about them? Try to draw from the students that these are qualities we admire in people. Have children write a brief sketch of a person they admire. They may refer to the list or use other attributes. After they write the descriptions have them share the writings in small groups.

2. Prewriting/Vocabulary Development. There are several words in the book that the students may not know--words that are connected with our history. Words such as: derringers, Bowie knives and lariat. After a class discussion of definition from context, ask for volunteers to use library resources to find out information about these topics. Using the notes these students can share their information with the class.

3. Prewriting/Writing/Editing. This story could be called a "tall tale." Discuss with children what a tall tale is using examples they would be familiar with. Have students write their own tall tale based on an activity they did or could imagine themselves doing. The following day have the children work in pairs for peer editing. Have them recopy the revised story for a final copy. Post in the room for all to enjoy.

4. Prewriting/Research/Patterned Writing. Felton uses several idioms in the story, such as, "quick as a cat," and weaves the origin of the saying. He does the same with other types of language such as "yip-ee-ee," and "poker face." Have the children look for other examples in the story. Discuss the meanings of commonly used idioms. Ask if they know the sources of the phrases. Ask for volunteers to use library resources to look up some and report back to the class later on their findings. Ask the children to choose an idiom and write a story explaining the source. The story should be patterned after Felton, in other words, a fictitious one. Have children share their writing by reading aloud, if they volunteer.

Ginsburg, Mirra. The Lazies. Ill. Marian Parry. Macmillan, 1973.

Ginsburg has translated a delightful group of folk tales from Russia that all involve, in one way or another, a character who is lazy. Many of the stories illustrate the moral that it is wrong to be lazy, but in three of the stories, "Three Knots," "The Clever Thief," and "The Lazy Daughter," the lazy one triumphs.

### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Writing. Discuss with children what it means to be lazy. Relate times when you have felt lazy. Ask children if they think they have ever been falsely accused of being lazy. Ask if laziness has ever paid off for you, as it does for some characters in the story.

Have characters write about a personal account of a time when they were lazy, or why they think they are or are not lazy. The direction of their writing doesn't matter, as long as it is a personal narrative. These are to be shared with one another, but not recopied into a final product.

2. Prewriting/Writing/Revising/Editing. Have the children choose one of their favorite stories from the book and change the ending. For example, in "Who Will Wash the Pot?", a new ending could be added on. What happened after the old man says, "You wash the pot."? These stories are to be revised, proofread and recopied so that the papers can be posted around the room.

3. Prewriting/Writing. "Toast and Honey." This story is the most ridiculous story in the book. Laziness is taken to an extreme. After discussing the story, have students write a short story, each beginning with "He (or she) was so lazy that . . ." For example, "She was so lazy that she wouldn't tie her shoes and tripped every other step. One day she was hurrying to get to school and . . . ."

4. Extensions. See suggestions for another book of humorous folktales, Jack and the Three Sillies by Richard Chase.

Goble, Paul. The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses. Bradbury Press, 1978.

This 1979 Caldecott Award winning book tells of a young Native American girl's love and compassion for horses. After spending many hours tending to the needs of her tribe's horses she is inadvertently carried off with the herd in their terrified flight from a thunderstorm. Lost miles from the tribe, the band of horses and the girl are taken under the leadership of a beautiful wild stallion. When she is rescued by her people a year later, she finds the adjustment impossible and longs to return to the wild horses. As her health fails, her parents' resolve weakens and she is allowed to return to the horses. To demonstrate that she had not forgotten her people she returns each year with a colt for her parents. When she no longer returns and the hunters see a beautiful mare traveling with the mighty stallion, they are sure she has become one of the wild horses.

In Goble's illustrations, the action moves across the double page expanses with a captivating rhythm. He has managed beautifully to present the vastness of the Plains.

1. Prewriting/Writing. Engage your class in a discussion of what the girl's life might be like living with the horses. How could she help the horses and how could they help her live more comfortably? Why would she choose horses over the other animals on the Plains? Why would her tribe be pleased to have one of their members in the herd of wild horses? Explore what it might be like to join any of the other colonies of animals on the Plains.

Have your students write a letter to their parents explaining to them why they're going to move away from home to live with a colony of \_\_\_\_\_. The children need to explain to their parents the advantages of having a relative as a member of this particular group of animals. These letters could be humorous or serious.

2. Prewriting/Listing/Role Playing/Writing/Editing. Read the description of the storm and the horses' reactions to it to the group again. List the sights, sounds, and smells. Then assign children to role play the characters in that scene and others to create sound and light effects. After role playing have students share their own reactions to thunderstorms and then write about them.

3. Prewriting/Research/Note Taking/Art. Goble's illustrations beg to be massive murals. Have the class plan a mural including all the creatures Goble includes in his pages. Observe carefully how he fills his space in the foreground, center and background to encompass a panoramic view of the Plains. Ask students to find information about each of the animals presented and write summaries of the animals' habits to be included with the mural. Edit and proofread each other's reports for public viewing.

After reading the reports go back to the book to determine if Goble's illustration accurately depict the habits of these animals.

4. Prewriting. Ask students to examine Goble's illustrations for clues to time changes. Does the position of the sun help tell the reader the time of day? Do the flowering plants indicate a seasonal change? Did his illustrations in anyway indicate the passage of the first year the girl spent with the wild horses?

5. Extensions. If your class enjoyed this book by Paul Goble, they may also enjoy the following: Brave Eagle's Account of the Fetterman Fight, The Friendly Wolf, and The Gift of the Sacred Dog.



Grimm, William and Jacob. The Brothers Grimm Popular Folk Tales.  
Trans. Brian Alderson. Ill. Michael Foreman. Doubleday, 1978.  
(192 pp.) (31 stories)

Household Tales. Trans. Lucy Crane. Ill. Walter Crane.  
McGraw Hill, 1966. (269 pp.) (Dover paperback ed. 1963)  
(52 stories.)

Vigorous, exciting, funny, the Grimm brothers' historic collection folk tales still speaks to children through the Goose Girl, Hans Hedgehog, the Bremen musicians, Ashenputtel, Hansel and Gretel and all the rest of their panorama of strong, confident heroes and heroines. These stories of simple, straight values--use your head, don't judge by appearances, keep your word--continue through the years to say things all children apparently want to hear.

Both of these books contain solid collections of the favorite tales. The Crane edition contains many more stories, but the best certainly appear in the Alderson book also. The translations differ in certain respects, although they are often very close. In general, the Alderson translations are spritely and colloquial, while Crane's are dignified and poetic.

Choosing between the two could perhaps be done on the basis of the graphics. The books differ widely in their illustrations. The Walter Crane pictures are major works of the 19th century illustrational art. The Foreman illustrations are occasionally mediocre and sometimes inept as well. Crane's realistic black and white pictures are graceful and formal with exquisite decoration. His head and tail pieces are marvels of tiny, amusing detail. Foreman's muted color illustrations are strange and surrealistic, but often very funny as well. Their vigor and imaginative quality frequently compensate for their clumsiness.

Another major difference is the appearance of the page. The McGraw-Hill-Dover edition reproduces the 19th century edition with its dense typography, narrow pages and feeling of darkness. The Doubleday book is larger in format and its pages are airy and bright, with somewhat larger type size and generous white space.

1. Prewriting/Writing: Your children can be led in a discussion of the similarities of the characters, events, and objects in these tales, such as the younger child who is thought to be deficient, but triumphs in the end; the magic object that helps the hero or heroine; the kind deed that brings supernatural help; the helpful animal; making the princess laugh and so forth. The children should make lists of the patterns, or motifs.

Using their lists of motifs as a resource, the children can write their own folk tales, translated into the late 20th century, their own era.

2. Writing: Grimm's tales are part of the great stread of humankind's oral tradition literature. Although most literature is now written down

for transmission, children continue to add to oral literature.

Ask the students to make a collection of the counting-out rhymes, jump rope rhymes, street rhymes, campfire ghost stories, and jokes that they tell each other. These can be winnowed by an editorial board of children--to eliminate duplicates--and compiled into a book. (If each item is submitted on a separate file card or piece of paper, the editing process is much simplified.)

3. Drama: The unified, straightforward, single element plots of folk tales lend themselves to dramatization. Have the children choose one of the stories and make it into a play for performance by the rest of the class.

4. Prewriting/Writing: The Grimms, as well as other 19th century folk-tale collectors, spent a great deal of time talking to older people and writing down the stories they told. The children should talk to any older people they can and write down the stories the people tell them. They can then check back through the Grimm collection to see how many are contained in the Grimm, the differences in the stories that are duplicated. All of the collected stories, whether from Grimm or not, can be collected into a class folk tale book.

This kind of activity could lead to oral history projects, or a fox-fire type experience.

5. Extensions: You may want to collect other volumes to keep in the classroom library -

Other Grimm Editions: The Juniper Tree, trans. Randall Jarrell, illus. Maurice Sendak; Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm, illus. Kay Nielsen (no translator given.) These two may be successfully compared with the two reviewed above.

Individual Grimm tales are available by a vast number of translators and illustrators.

Other Folk Tales: The Classic Fairy Tales by Iona and Peter Opie. The Penguin Book of World Folk Tales, ed. Milton Rugoff. One Hundred Favorite Folktales, ed. Stith Thompson. (The last two are broad and eclectic collections.)

Leach, Maria. Whistle in the Graveyard. Viking, 1974.

If you don't believe in ghosts, witches and goblins, this book may change your mind. Marie Leach has widely collected short folktales that make the supernatural believable. Cats, first ladies and presidents just may haunt the White House.

This collection is well written and uses straight forward reporting to make these supposedly truthful occurrences seem real. Why there is even a tale about seeing your own ghost. How? Read the title.

### Classroom Suggestions

1. Writing. "White House Ghosts." Tell the class that they have been chosen by the United States Government to expel one of the ghosts from the White House. They must put the soul to rest. Then have them tell how they are going to go about doing it in a short paragraph.
2. Prewriting/Research/Writing. "White House Ghosts." Discuss with the class the concept that although ghosts seem to frighten mortals, they rarely do them harm. Have individuals choose a famous person who lived in the White House and do some research--what are some of the troubles he or she had while living in the White House? Then have the students imagine themselves to be that person--why might they be haunting the White House? What would it take to make them rest? What kind of haunting would they be doing? Ask them to explain in a paragraph or two what the problem was that caused their extended unrest, and how to resolve this problem of the past.
3. Writing. "Tain't So." Old Mr. Dinkins had short conversations with several people from around the countryside. Have the class chart different people who might have had an occasion to pass by the graveyard (person, description, occupation, reason for passing by). Then have the them create dialogue between Mr. Dinkins and these people and insert this into the story. Or, write and insert a second burial service. Or, rewrite the ending. Or, write a moral to the story.
4. Writing/Letter/Editing. "Crossing the Bridge." Have the class write a letter to the Great Barrington, Massachusetts, Chamber of Commerce asking for information about the Housatonic River Bridge. Have them phrase their request to include information about local legends.
5. Extensions/Interview Techniques/Listening/Editing. Many communities have tales of unusual or explained happenings. Have your children speak with parents, relatives or neighbors and see if they can find someone who would be willing to tell a story on tape, or would be willing to come into the class for this interview. Have the class transcribe the story and check it with the teller. Then they can "publish" it, with acknowledgements and permission, in a class book.

Lindgren, Astrid, The Tomten and the Fox. C. Ward, McCann and Geoghegan, Inc., N. Y 1979 (paper).

Tomten, the night watcher, sees the fox, Reynard, sneak into the farm one winter's night. Reynard is hungry and is looking for a hen to satisfy his hunger. Tomten realizes that Reynard's hunger needs satisfying and finds a way to feed Reynard and save the chickens.

Lindgren's soft narrative and Wilberg's warm-muted illustrations blend to make this book a loving experience. Calm, quiet and caring, this book is ideal for settling down a group of active children. Lindgren's The Tomten (1968) is, also, a fine book that can be used with the following activities.

1. Prewriting. Make a list, on chart paper, of all the little people you know about (e.g. hobbits, elves, tomtens, etc.)

Discuss what these little people do. Make a sentence chart describing what each does. For example: Leprecauns mend shoes and bury pots of gold.

Older children can research little people taking notes on what they do. Then they can bring their findings back to a group and share with one another. At this time they could compose a sentence for each group and add it to the chart.

2. Sentence Expansion. Take a descriptive sentence from the story and delete all the adjectives and adverbs. Example:

Take: "Where can a hungry fox find something to eat?"

Change to: Where can a fox find something to eat?

Present the students with the basic sentence. Ask the children to help you make this sentence more vivid. Some leading questions might be: What kind of fox? Something (What?) to eat?

After you have composed several sentences on the board give the children the original sentence. Have them compare the sentences and then discuss which one is better and their reasons.

For a closure activity, have the children go back through Tomten and the Fox and have the children pick out sentences that they think are rich in descriptive language.

When the Boy is teased about his lack of a father by his peers, he goes on a long journey in quest of his missing parent, the Lord of the Sun. After he is transformed into an arrow and arrives at his father's house, he must prove himself through four tests. Each test requires him to investigate some aspect of his personality and some aspect of the environment. He emerges from the final kiva transformed into the lightning images of the Father, and he returns to earth bringing with him the "spirit" of the Father to enrich the lives of men.

Gerald McDermott's picture books each retell some folk or mythic story from a specific culture in universal terms. This Native American tale won the Caldecott Award for its rich and colorful illustrations. McDermott has retold the Pueblo tale in his vivid cinematic style, drawing on elements of several Pueblo Indian cultures for his imagery. McDermott is less concerned with the new implications of the tale within its culture than with the larger hero tale cycle that the story reinforces. The Boy's quest is that of Hercules or Phaethon.

McDermott grew up in Michigan and studied art in Detroit.

1. Prewriting. Arrow to the Sun provides a very challenging picture reading experience for all ages. Examine the symbol of the "spark of life" which the Lord of the Sun sends to the earth and follow it throughout the text.

Look carefully at the eyes of the boy, the Lord of the Sun, the Arrow Maker. What changes do you see? Compare the boy's form when he begins the quest for his father to his form after his transformation. What visual characteristics of his father has he acquired? What do you think McDermott is attempting to symbolize with the colors and designs he uses?

2. Prewriting/Visual Literacy: McDermott's illustrations make use of many conventions. Have your class do a close reading of the pictures. For example, look at the first double spread of the Sun sending his arrow to the earth. Each circle of the "spark of life" is slightly different. They progress in color from deep orange to almost all gold to the motif of the child. Each circle is like one frame of a cel animation. Look also at the Boy being transposed into an arrow. The same frame-by-frame process is evident. (This use of multiple images on the same page is a learned visual literacy convention.)

Have your students look closely at the picture for other film techniques in the illustrations. (long shot, medium shot, close-up)

3. Visual Literacy/Writing: McDermott uses his illustrations to carry much of this action. Ask your students to choose one of the wordless pages and write about what is happening. Let them compare what they have written.

These pages are rich with imagery. Many students may have interpreted the events differently. Let them discuss how their observations led to their narrative. Since this is a book of literature with several valid interpretations, accept the various written assignments, but suggest that each time they read the book they may see something more or something different.

4. Extension: Gerald McDermott was a filmmaker BEFORE he began to create children's picture books. His film version of Arrow to the Sun was made about the same time that he worked on the book. Bring in a copy of the film and have the children view it. How does the storytelling quality change from book-to-film or film-to-book? How does McDermott use body language and physical movement to eliminate the need for most of the words? How does the use of music enhance the story? Follow the use of the ear of corn from the beginning to the end of the film. How does the film version help or limit your understanding of the four tests? (Arrow to the Sun is available from Texture Films, 1600 Broadway, N. Y. 10019.)

Musgrove, Margaret. Ashanti to Zulu. Ill. Leo and Diane Dillon.  
Dial, 1976 (paperback)

Margaret Musgrove uses the alphabet to guide her reader through the ceremonies, celebrations, and customs of twenty-six African tribes, from the Ashanti to the Zulu. Full color paintings by Leo and Diane Dillon compliment the simple but elegant imagery created in Musgrove's text. While Musgrove concentrates on only one prominent feature of the tribal culture, the Dillons picture the depth and detail of the context in rich colors of African life. These elegant illustrations often overpower the narrative text, but offer a variety of opportunities for developing visual literacy. Although this book uses a picture book format, it is particularly appropriate for grades 4 - 6.

1. Prewriting/Art/Writing. Design a "kente," the beautiful cloth woven by Ashanti women. Compose an explanation of its meaning and importance. If possible, include it in a museum catalogue for an exhibition of all "kentes" designed by the readers of Ashanti to Zulu.
2. Prewriting/Writing. Chagga children undergo a special initiation ceremony when they are considered adults. How does our society indicate that passage? Compose the message you would like your parents to say when they considered you have become an adult.
3. Prewriting/Writing. Ewe drummers "talk" with drums. Compose a message you wish to send and try to give it the rhythm of a chant. Or, Zulu dancers salute their leaders with drums and dancing. Compose a salute to a person whom you admire and attempt to set it to the rhythms of a chant.
4. Prewriting/Persuasion. In an Ouadai Market under a canopy of leaves, women bargain to sell items. Bargaining is serious business although it can be fun, but suppose they have an unpopular item to sell. Compose a sales talk for the vegetable you dislike most. If possible, attempt to exchange it with your classmates for something more valuable.
5. Prewriting/Research/Writing. Each picture includes a dwelling for the tribe under discussion. Have the class look up further information on some of these housing styles and design a booklet of five plans and compose a description of each one.
6. Prewriting/Research/Writing. Women seem to play important roles in many of their tribes. Have the students go back through the book and select out some specific examples. Then have them create short written sketches about the roles of women. Assemble them into a booklet. Perhaps some students will want to go further and research specific women and their deeds and create a booklet entitled Great Women of the Tribes of Africa.



Baskin, Hosea and Tobias and Lisa Baskin. Hosie's Alphabet.  
Ill. Leonard Baskin.. Viking, 1972.

A Caldecott Honor Book for 1973, the text utilizes the vocabulary of Leonard Baskin's three young children and exposes the reader to a menagerie of intriguing animals (with two exceptions: a demon and a gargoyle) and equally engaging illustrations.

The adjectives used, some alliterative (a "ghastly garrulous gargoyle"), some metaphorical ("the imperious eagle, spangled and splendid") combine with the unique illustrations to make this alphabet book a must in any school library.

1. Prewriting. Note the variety in size, type and arrangement of the print. Discuss the appropriateness of the print characteristics used for each illustration. Have the children experiment with different print types, sizes and arrangements (some of their own creation) they might use to do an alphabet book of animals they are familiar with.
2. Prewriting/Writing. Note the adjectives the Baskin children used to characterize the animals. Help children to characterize the adjectives: some are alliterative, some metaphorical, some rhyming, some imaginative. Sometimes the children used only one adjective, sometimes two or more. Have the children orally create their own alphabet book. For each letter of the alphabet (or just a few randomly selected letters) have the children create a noun phrase in the style of those phrases in Hosie's Alphabet.

If the children suggest only a noun (ex. a bear), have them describe the bear using the following visual (put on board) array:

- a ghastly garrulous gargoyle
- a \_\_\_\_\_ bear

Requestion or enlist the aid of other students until you get a pattern such as "a boisterous burly bear." When the oral creativity is flowing suggest that each child choose a letter of the alphabet and have them create their own illustrated page for an alphabet book. (A book can be made following the steps suggested under Writing/Editing in Brian Wildsmith's ABC).

3. Editing. Note the letter "A" example in the text ("The armadillo, belted and amayonean"). Compare the position of the adjectives and noun here with those in the "G" example ("a ghastly garrulous gargoyle"). Have children note the use of the comma. Then have the children look at the "E" example. Again, note where the adjectives are relative to the noun. Note the missing comma after "eagle." Have the children take the examples for "G," "I," "L," "S," and try to transform the position of the two adjectives from before to after the noun. Suggest that the children write

three noun phrases first with two adjectives before the noun then writing them again with the adjective after the noun. Generate more noun phrases orally using two adjectives. Have the children transform the adjectives from before to after the noun.

Have the children review the alphabet books they created in the prewriting/writing activity above. Ask them to look for alternative ways of writing their noun phrases using this transformation format.

Baylor, Byrd. The Way to Start a Day. Ill. Peter Parnall. Scribners, 1978.

How do you meet the new day? Baylor takes you through time and distance on a whispered word so warm and so comforting that you get lost within the story. You experience ancient, native and global cultures different from your own and never feel a stranger.

This picture book format exemplifies the marriage of print and art to tell a story. The pictures draw you into the script that wraps you in a warmth of understanding.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Writing. Have your children discuss what they do the first thing in the morning. Then have them ask their parents, sisters, brothers, grandparents and close relatives what they do the first thing in the morning.

As they return with the information have them collate it on several charts labeled by such categories as Father, Mother, Brother, and so on.

Have the class divide into as many groups as there are charts. Then direct them to write and illustrate a book from the charted information. The books could be about all the fathers or about an imaginative family.

OR, have children find out what their relatives and family do the last thing at night. Then follow the above sequence.

OR, have the children write about their families' first things-last things. Example: The first thing my dad wants is a cup of coffee. The last thing my dad wants is to be late for work.

2. Extensions. Have children explore other books by Byrd Baylor such as The Clay Sings, Before You Came This Way.

Marcia Brown's unique alphabet book begins "All Butterflies" and continues on successive double-page spreads, through the alphabetic sequence established in the title: "cats dance, elephants fly" through "your zoo." Classic woodcuts enhance the text.

The dust jacket blurb classifies All Butterflies as an ideal "first book". However it is equally appropriate for older children who are experimenting in writing with the meaningful juxtaposition of seemingly unrelated words. As is often the case with an alphabet book All Butterflies is sufficiently versatile to be used with children of a wide variety of ages.

### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Research/Note Taking/Writing/Editing. Have children note the many butterflies incorporated into almost all the illustrations. Note that they are all different and suggest that some children might want to research the different varieties of butterflies. Have them select three different types of butterfly, take notes on those types from the references and make an oral or written report to the class.

Or, have the children write descriptions of several different butterflies. Also have them photograph pictures of those butterflies using a copy stand. Other members of the class can then read the descriptions and attempt to match the appropriate picture to the description.

Or, as a follow-up to the prewriting activities have the children who did the research review All Butterflies to determine whether Brown's butterflies are authentic reproductions of true species or not.

2. Prewriting/Writing. Discuss the sequential pattern of Brown's text. Have the children create a group oral story beginning with "Angry bees," "Any bears?" or some similar story starter. When children become comfortable with the pattern orally have them work in small groups or individually to create their own alphabet book.

Eichenberg, Fritz. Ape in a Cape. Harcourt, 1952. (paperback)

This animal alphabet book where children are introduced to each letter through humorous nonsensical rhymes (for example, "Ape in a Cape," "Hare at the Fair," "Rat with a Bat") is a good introduction to functional rhyming. Children will be tempted to generate similar rhymes orally. Classic bold lithographs of colorful animal characters augment the text.

### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Writing. Have the children orally create their own rhymes similar to those in the text. (You will hardly be able to stop your children from making this extension). Have the children write and illustrate one or more rhymes. (Collected copies can be made into a book as suggested in the Writing/Editing activities suggested for Brian Wildsmith's ABC).

2. Prewriting/Writing. The same as activity #1 but focus attention on a single prepositional phrase pattern drawn from the Eichenberg text. For example:

<u>Pattern</u>	<u>Example</u>
in + an article of clothing	Ape in a Cape
in + a location	Goat in a boat
in + (a) state of mind	Dove in love

3. Editing. Have the children compare their rhymes with Eichenberg's. Ask: which are funnier, more realistic? Have the children work in small groups taking several rhymes and suggesting how they might change Eichenberg's/ their own rhymes to make them funnier/more realistic.

4. Expansion. You may want to explore other patterned alphabet books with your children: A Apple Pie by Kate Greenaway (gr. 1 - 3); All About Arthur An Absolutely Absurd Ape by Eric Carle (gr. 4 - 6); C is For Circus by Bernice Chadiet (gr. 1 - 3); ABC of Ecology by Harry Milgrom (gr. 4 - 6).

Many children will feel a special kinship to Patrick. As a young child he was fond of the outdoors and outdoor activities. He wasn't too fond of school nor was he a particularly talented child, just average. He loved to play practical jokes on others and he always wore clean socks and underwear no matter how slovenly his outward appearance. As an adult, of course, Patrick was a successful lawyer, Governor of Virginia, orator ("give me liberty, or give me death") and hero of the American Revolution.

Not the most popular of Fritz's brief biographies for younger children nor necessarily the best written (the importance of the 29th of May in Patrick Henry's life seems a bit contrived), the text, nonetheless, offers a straightforward, authoritative and humorous portrayal of an ordinary man-turned-hero. Children benefit from this honesty and come to know Patrick Henry as a real believable human, as well as a hero. Tomes's expressionistic illustrations perfectly compliment.

1. Prewriting/Listing. Have children describe Patrick Henry; not just his physical characteristics but his personality as well. Ask: Would you likely have been a friend of Patrick Henry's? Would anything Patrick did as a child have made you angry at him, made you envy him, laugh at him? Write up a list comparing Patrick's personality and physical characteristics with your own.
2. Prewriting/Vocabulary Development. Fritz uses many unique compound words in the text (birdsong, woodlands, foxhorn, storekeeping, for example). Have children scan the text for these unique words, make a list and discuss their possible meanings.
3. Prewriting/Vocabulary Development. Select several of the unique figures of speech Fritz uses. Have the children substitute their own idioms using the basic form of figure. For example, write "He was too small to know a fox from a flower and too young to be counted when they added up the men in Virginia" (p. 8). Have the children suggest substitutions for "too small to know a \_\_\_\_\_ from a \_\_\_\_\_" or "too young to be counted when they added up the . . . ." (Some other possibilities: "Patrick was sweet on young Sarah Shelton . . . ." (p. 19); ". . . the wigmaker celebrated so hard that he imagined he was a cannon." (p. 41); "Patrick Henry was all tongue." (p. 44).)
4. Prewriting/Writing. Direct the children's attention to the title and discuss the importance of the 29th of May. Have the children think about their own special date (perhaps their birthdate). Ask the children to share the important things that happened to them on their special date. For those children who can't recall any important happenings, have them interview their family members and note in writing any important

data. Suggest that the children gather their data and generate a personal autobiography perhaps using the title "Where was name of child on the date of month ?

Or, suggest that the children choose an important date in their lives and begin to write a special date diary (perhaps they could choose one specific day of the week or month and write a diary just for that day or date).

5. Prewriting/Vocabulary Development. Suggest that children construct a glossary of unique terms Fritz used throughout the text.

6. Extension. Students who enjoyed this book may enjoy other biographies by Jean Fritz, such as: Will You Sign Here, John Hancock; Why Don't You Get A Horse Sam Adams?; What's The Big Idea, Ben Franklin?; Why Can't You Make Them Behave, King George?



Ruth Fox Hume presents the biographies of six women whose lives were pivotal in the development of medical practices. Three should be familiar to readers, Elizabeth Blackwell, Florence Nightingale, and Eve Currie, but three others equally important are portrayed dramatically, Elizabeth Garrett, Sophia Jex-Blake, and Mary Corinna Putnam. Each woman is characterized by her independent spirit and intense commitment to medical care. From the life and career of Elizabeth Blackwell whose hallmark is her struggle for adequate education for women rather than her position as the first woman doctor, Hume follows the course plotted by these women: Florence Nightingale's passion for the role of the nurse in public health; Elizabeth Garrett's acceptance as a professional; Sophia Jex-Blake's fight for equal but separate education for women; Mary Corinna Putnam's development of effective medical training; Eve Currie's brilliant research.

Hume's balanced point-of-view of these rejections of traditional societal roles and the emphasis upon the true motivation behind these people could encourage boys and girls to read these biographies and appreciate the struggle necessary for achievement in any career they should choose.

1. Prewriting/Letter/Editing. Elizabeth Blackwell. After a preliminary discussion of her strengths of personality, have the class compose a letter of recommendation for Elizabeth Blackwell to the "young gentlemen of Geneva College of Medicine" who voted on her acceptance as the first woman student. Be sure to consider the appropriateness of the language as well as the content.
2. Prewriting/Notes. Florence Nightingale and Elizabeth Blackwell were friends. Have your students conjecture from their knowledge of both women and compose some good advice from Elizabeth Blackwell for Florence Nightingale when she is making her choice between marrying Richard M. Miles or devoting her life to nursing.
3. Prewriting/Notes/Speech. Florence Nightingale posed an "uncompromising anger at the needless sufferings of mankind." Have your students pretend that they have been asked to testify before a UNICEF committee on the needless suffering of children. Compose the testimony. Devote some classtime to a hearing.
4. Writing/Cartoon/Editorial. Sophia Jax-Blake. Edith Pecky was bypassed for a scholarship at the University of Edinburg and the scholarship was awarded to a less talented male student. Her support sent the "indignant nerve" of her time to be printed in newspapers. Have some of your students design a political cartoon--it was a political decision--in support of her right to the scholarship. Then have the class compose an editorial to accompany the cartoon.

Johnston, Joanna. Harriet and the Runaway Book. Ill. Ronald Himler.  
Harper & Row, 1977.

This story of Harriet Beecher Stowe begins in pre-civil war America. Harriet is one of the eight Beecher children. Her father, Lyman Beecher, is a New England minister who has great hopes of raising his sons to follow in his footsteps. Of course for Harriet this is not possible. A girl's greatest expectation was to become a housewife or a teacher of girls or very small children.

Harriet and her family moved to southern Ohio where she witnessed the evils of slavery. Ohio was a free state, but is just across the river from Kentucky. She became involved in helping slaves to escape through the underground railroad. After marriage and six children, Harriet returned to the North and wrote Uncle Tom's Cabin, based on her experiences and observations. It became a best seller, and so influenced the public, that Abraham Lincoln was to say, upon meeting her, "So this is the little lady who started this great big war."

While the reading level of this book would best fit in second or third grade, the content level is higher. It is the type of book which could easily be read by students from the 4th through 6th grades. This is a good introduction to biography for both boys and girls.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Writing. Discuss slavery and its implications. Include the different points of view: North vs. South, slave vs. master, plantation owner vs. independent farmer, and so forth. Encourage the children to look at the question from these different points of view. Possible writing topics include: How would Harriet's views of slavery differ if she had been raised in the South by a plantation owner father? Or, what were some of the other reasons the North was interested in stopping slavery? What were the economic implications of slavery?
2. Prewriting/Research/Notetaking. Have students find out about the underground railroad system. Have them make notes as they read. Questions for this research: What were the laws concerning runaway slaves? How did the underground railroad work? Where did it lead? What were the dangers?
3. Prewriting/Persuasive Writing. Select sections of Uncle Tom's Cabin to read to the class. Pick passages which would illustrate the effect this story could have on public sentiment. Use this as a basis for a discussion on persuasive writing.

Have the class try some of the techniques that Harriet Beecher Stowe used in some of their writing. Or, have them write an editorial trying to persuade people to take a stand on an issue. Possible topics: nuclear weapons, non-smoking laws, ecology and pollution.

Macaulay, David. Pyramid. Houghton Mifflin, 1975. (paperback)

David Macaulay explains the step-by-step process of the construction of the great pyramid. Beginning with the pharaoh's order that his chief architect, Mahmut Hotep, design his tomb. Macaulay traces the construction through the organization of the work force, the location of building materials and their transport to the construction site. He weaves throughout the simple but effective text the Egyptian philosophy of life and death which led to the building of these massive monuments. Then, up through each level of construction, Macaulay takes his readers through the incredible construction project, past the hazardous working conditions, and caps his description with the reader's understanding of the enormous achievement of the Egyptians as they finally complete the pyramid. He concludes the inspection with a thorough explanation of the entombment of the pharaoh's body in his pyramid.

#### Classroom Suggestions

1. Art/Writing. Have the class plan a monument to a person or group of persons who have no monument erected in their honor but do deserve one. Let them design it and, if possible sketch it in simple lines as Macaulay did. Then, compose an explanation for the selection committee.
2. Prewriting/Research. Have individuals or small groups choose one of the work forces as introduced by Macaulay: stone-cutter; surveyor; mason; foreman; mortar maker; carpenter. Trace its role throughout construction. Then compose a script for a job interview and enact it with another who has read Pyramid.
3. Writing. Have students "become" the pharaoh, compose the speech to be given at the dedication of the pyramid.
4. Writing. Ask students to do a close reading of construction methods and compose a list of warnings about hazardous working conditions.
5. Extensions. Houghton Mifflin has released a twenty-five minute videotape of the creative process of how Pyramid became a book. David Macaulay shares his research slides, notebooks, and original sketches. (Available from Houghton Mifflin Company, 2 Park Street, Boston, MA 02108 for a handling fee.)
6. Extensions. Students who enjoyed reading about the construction of the Pyramid will also enjoy Macaulay's books entitled: The Castle; The City; The Cathedral; Unbuilding.

Munari, Bruno. Bruno Munari's ABC. Collins World, 1962.

A cornucopia of familiar items (banana, dog, egg, fly, for example) greet each child who ventures into this alphabet book. Munari employs his interest and knowledge of modern art in selecting a variety of objects and language patterns for each letter.

Adults and children alike will appreciate the large full color illustrations and the threads of humor Munari weaves into his illustrations.

### Classroom Suggestions

1. Prewriting/Writing/Modeling/Vocabulary Development. Select any of the many language patterns offered in the text. Discuss each pattern (or any one of the patterns); have the children generate other examples of the pattern orally. The children may then write and illustrate their favorite language sample. Possible patterns (examples taken from Munari's text):

<u>Pattern</u>	<u>Example</u>
Simple list	an Elephant, an Egg
"and" connective	a Feather and a Fish
prepositional phrase	an Ant or an Apple
alliterative noun phrase	a Verticle Violet Violin

2. Prewriting/Writing. Recall that Mr. Munari is a versatile artist who creates among other works of art, mobiles. Discuss mobiles: what they are, how they work. Show the children the first four pages of the book. Note the mobiles. Ask the children if they would like to create their own special letter mobiles. Have children select their favorite letter (or letters) of the alphabet. Discuss the design of the mobile: Will it be a single letter mobile? a multiple letter mobile? What material will we use in making the mobile parts? Will the letter form be upper or lower case?

Have children suggest a few favorite words for each letter. List these on the board of a chart. Have the children construct their letter mobiles. Suggest that they may want to choose one of the words on the board and use it to decorate the mobile. For example

3. Writin~/Directions. Having discussed how to construct a mobile in activity #2, students may want to write a list of directions for mobile construction for another class of children in the school (can be completed as a language experience story).

NOTE: A good simple reference for mobile construction is Peggy Parish. Beginning Mobiles. Macmillan, 1979.

4. Prewriting/Writing/Modeling. Discuss the role of the flies in the book: How does Munari indicate the fly's flight path? How else do we know about the flies besides seeing them in the pictures (Note the small text, especially the punctuation marks). From the text what else do we know about the flies? How does the narrator feel about the flies? Suggest to the children that they write an alphabet book like Munari's using a fly (flies), a bee (bees) a bird (birds) or some other animal. Discuss what insect or animal to choose. What will the insect/animal do and/or say in the book? What will the narrator say to the insect/animal? What objects will be included in the book? Will these objects have to be related in some way to the insect. You may wish to write some of the ideas on the board or a chart. Select appropriate materials and create the book.

Wildsmith, Brian. Brian Wildsmith's ABC. Watts, 1962.

Large iridescent illustrations highlight each letter of the alphabet and Wildsmith's text consists of single words printed in both upper and lower case letters.


Young children will readily recognize most of the subjects Wildsmith has chosen to exemplify each letter. All subjects will stir a child's sense of wonder and excitement. Superb effort from a superb author-illustrator.

### Extended Activity

Prewriting: Discuss the format of the book. Ask the children how the book is organized (Note alphabetic order, use of a single word per letter written in both upper and lower case letters, the use of the color white to highlight the letter being represented. Perhaps even discuss the title page, "signatures" of a book, "end papers," and the copyright page.)

Request the children to think of some favorite words (or favorite animals, foods, toys, etc.). Generate as much discussion as possible. Copy the children's words on the board or on a chart.

Suggest that children make their own alphabet book. Discuss title, color scheme for the lettering (particularly the featured letter of the alphabet). Assign a letter to each child.

Writing: Give each child construction paper folded in half  and some art materials (tempera, watercolor, etc.) so that each can write and illustrate one letter of the alphabet (or some similar arrangement). Let the children use the board list generated during the prewriting for standard spelling. Have them write and illustrate on the inside of the folded construction paper so that the finished copies can be bound into a book. (These copies then become the "signatures" of your book).

Editing: Give one child or small group of children the responsibility of organizing the signatures by alphabetical order into the book. These children may also be responsible for adding a title page, end papers and a mock copyright page.

Display Wildsmith's book and the class book and invite further comparison of the two.

NOTE: Your children need not be involved in all the activities suggested above. You may have them go no further than generating the list of favorite words in the prewriting phase. Or they may do the writing but the editing may be left for the teacher to do.

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